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THREE DAYS AT KILLARNEY;

WITH

OTHER POEMS.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND
GREEN.

1828.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY SAMUEL MANNING AND CO.
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PREFACE.

A FEW words will convey all that appears necessary to be observed relative to the following Poems.

Three days spent at Killarney in the summer of 1827, gave rise to the Poem so called in this Volume: in which a separate Canto is allotted to the employments of each day. The scenery and the incidents are delineated correctly as they occurred; the legends and the superstitions are those of the place and country; and the sketches of national and individual character are given with studious fidelity.

To the EARL of KENMARE the most grateful acknowledgments are due from every tourist, for the facilities which his admirable regulations afford

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to the visitors of Killarney : and the Author feels himself under great obligation for the politeness which he experienced, and the valuable information respecting the scenery and phenomena of the Shannon, which he received, during the stag-hunt, from the KNIGHT of GLYNN.

Though ‘Cambuscan’ is but a fragment, yet the time will not perhaps be thought totally misapplied, which has been occupied in an endeavour to render the public more familiar with a tale admired by Spencer and by Milton. The friendly interest with which LORD CHURCHILL perused this attempt in manuscript, is one of the innumerable kindnesses conferred by him upon the Author, during a period of four and twenty years.

With regard to the ‘Elias Hydrochous ;’ nothing beyond a hint from the title has been borrowed from the Milton manuscript, preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge ; and called by Bishop Mansel, the Palladium of the College.

Overton,

Near Marlbro’.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
KILLARNEY :—	
Day 1st.	1
Day 2nd.	29
Day 3rd.	59
 CAMBUSCAN ; or, The SQUIRE'S TALE : modernised	
from CHAUCER	93
 ELIAS HYDROCHOUS ; a SACRED DRAMA	125

KILLARNEY.



FIRST DAY.

KILLARNEY.

DAY FIRST.

I.

WHERE Erin ramparts out the western deep
With Kerry's mountain realm and rocky shore,
Dismay and solitude their vigil keep,
'Mid darkness, hurricane, and thunder's roar.
In vision round them throng the days of yore,
Departed saints and heroes they behold,
And shudder at traditionary lore,
By unimaginable heralds told,
Who deeds of other years and other worlds unfold.

II.

Such the stern mood of thunder and of night,
Where Brandon Hill frowns awful on Tralee,
Or Kerry Head uprears his cloudy height,
And in defiance breasts the raging sea.
But atmospheres serene have charms for me,
And daylight sparkling on the Emerald Isle,
Where Nature in her bounty wantons free,
Till all Elysium springing at her smile,
O'er cliff, o'er mead, o'er dell the lengthened march
beguile.

III.

Awake, young pilgrim, mark, how paints the dawn
With varied hues Killarney's fairy reign,
Where castellated rock and abbeyed lawn,
And island groves adorn the liquid plain;
While margining the triple lake's domain,
Far as the southward gazer can descry,
Forests and towering steeps in far-drawn train
Mingle their vastness with the clouds on high,
Like steps by which the soul ascends into the sky.

IV.

What shade, what coolness, in the embowering wood,
Around Bellevue, beneath the templed brow
Of Aghadoe ; where ages long hath stood
The round-tower's mystery^(a). Mark the ruddy
 glow
Of youth and age, in never ending flow,
That to the eventful contest wend their way,
Where fate, and judges of the field, must shew
If England or Hibernia win the day :
Sure prelude to carouse, to song, debate and fray.

V.

They start, they fly, they come^(b)—the course is
 done :
The chorus of wild triumph rides the air
In uproar : the Milesian steed hath won ;
And even the loser hath a heart to share
That universal joy ;—but, O, beware
The witchery of the turf—the mirth it brings
Is harbinger to ruin and despair,
Bears off estate and fame on harpy wings,
And like an adder bites, and like a scorpion stings.

VI.

Escaped from such Charybdis, by the bridge
Of Scarvagh-Killin speed we to the stream
Of Lein, while gathering storms from Toomies' ridge
Roll downward (murky as the night-mare's dream)
With here and there a brief and doubtful gleam.
Even so unlooked-for sorrows oft deface
The morn of youth, and dim its orient beam ;
For not on earth hath man his resting-place ;
Where wanderers are we all, and all must run the race,

VII.

Through time and death's dominion, to the close
Of nature, when the trumpet calls to doom.
But much awry our speculation goes
If present need we miss : the tempest's womb
Is bursting on the mountains, and the gloom
Dissolves in smoking deluges around,
That heaven and earth in one vast night entomb :
And cleft of rock, or cavern under ground,
Must be our shelter now, if shelter may be found.

VIII.

Thus halting, look to where Macarthy More,
With arm unconquerable, upheld his reign,
And welcoming the battle's fierce uproar,
Stood like a lonely island of the main,
Whose adamantine boundaries disdain
The billow and the blast. For never quailed
The heart of Erin ; never shall a train
Of gallant sons be wanting, robed or mailed,
To grace her in repose, or guard her if assailed.

IX.

O, my loved Erin! couldst thou brook the curb
Of order and of law, how blest wert thou :
For then should no intestine broil disturb
Thy peace ; nor vain repining cloud thy brow.
Theirs the reproach and guilt who better know,
Yet false alarums ring to party rage ;
And bid thee with unhallowed ardour glow,
Sully with deeds of blood thine history's page,
And for imagined wrongs eternal warfare wage.

X.

'The sun returns ; haste on, my friend ; behold,
Where yawns Dunlow's abyss the crags between.
Well may the bosom heave, the blood run cold,
And the knee tremble. 'Mid this gulf hath been
The hand, the visitation of the Unseen,
In majesty of horror :—list !—no sound ;
Look up—no life, no vestiges of green.
Solitude, desolation all around,
And cloud-capt peaks that gird the unfathomable
 profound.

XI.

Yet terror call it not, but stern delight,
To gaze upon such chaos : while the mind
Apart from her inthralling clay takes flight,
In adoration soaring unconfined.
What error theirs, to happiness how blind,
Who measure all by sense, reserve no room
Within the heart for thought of loftier kind,
But slumber in forgetfulness and gloom,
Till bursts upon their heads the thunder-peal of doom.

XII.

A wilderness like this, the Tishbite seer
Explored in Horeb, when Jehovah sent,
Before his mercy-seat, the dread career
Of whirlwind, that the rocks and mountains rent.
Then quivered earth, then blazed the firmament :
But wind, nor fire, nor earthquake was the shrine
That veiled the glory of the Omnipotent.
For, hark ! the still small voice, mysterious sign
Of God within the breast, and colloquy divine.

XIII.

Genius of Contemplation ! not in scorn
Do we adventure, nor with breath profane,
To pour a soul into the mellow horn,
And wake the marvels of thy lonely reign.
A voice, we know not whence, repeats the strain ;
A thousand tongues, invisible, reply
In mimic note again, and yet again ;
Till faint in distance the sweet echoes die,
Like reascending choirs of angels to the sky.

XIV.

They are but sounds ; yet not in vain we lend
To sounds so worthy paradise an ear :
We catch their inspiration, and ascend
In fantasy's immeasurable career,
Beyond the lunar ball and starry sphere,
To where the cherubim and seraphim
Hold jubilee throughout the eternal year,
In choral ecstasies of praise to Him
Before whose sight the heavens and all their hosts are
dim.

XV.

O might it be for ever thus !—too soon
The bond of sense corporeal checks our flight
And drags us down, to climb, in blaze of noon,
The vast abrupt of wonder and affright,
By lake, by stream, or buried under height
Of rocks that nod, impending to their fall.
Unmingled good is not for mortal wight :
'Toil, pain, vicissitude, must come to all
Who on terrestrial orb, poor feeble emmets crawl.

XVI.

And is there not a cause ?—Think how began
The world's first pilgrimage of youth and joy,
When frailty-free arose imperial man,
God's image, heir of peace without alloy.
Alas ! that sin should enter, and annoy
The bliss of Eden, troubling the serene,
With hopes that cheat, and pleasures that destroy.
Sithence hard task for dicipline hath been,
From transitory toys the unwilling soul to wean.

XVII.

Clambering aloft, we bound, we walk, we creep,
Mile after mile, from rocky stair to stair ;
Till now advancing toward the topmost steep,
And elevate beyond the reach of care,
Heaven's vestibule we tread. Yet signs there are
Even here of habitation : smoke-wreaths blue,
Beneath yon rock denote some uncouth lair ;
Perchance of one who wealth and grandeur knew,
Yet voluntary thence to holy rest withdrew.

XVIII.

Ah, no ! a sorceress here (so rumour tells)
Whose alchemies the bearded grain transmute,
In limbec and retort concocts the spells,
That travesty the human to the brute :
Yet such the gust of interdicted fruit,
That though her victims dwindle and wax pale,
Day after day, her threshold they salute,
To quaff her mountain-dew's (c) insidious bale,
Whereof, who deeply drinks, the draught shall sorely
wail.

XIX.

For think not this the pearly moisture cool,
Ambrosial, dropping from the wheels of morn :
It is a wicked dew, that will befool
And send thee forth, of strength and reason shorn,
A dolt, an ape, the laughing-stock of scorn !
Be not enamoured of contempt and blame,
Pluck not the rose that bears so sharp a thorn ;
Touch not—or if thou hast, thy grasp reclaim,
Nor thus for poison truck, health, competence and fame.

XX.

She comes—in semblance of a withered crone,
Goblet in hand. “Tired stranger, drink,” she cries ;
“Unhappy he, who on himself alone,
“Oblivious of elixir’s aid, relies :”
But heed her not ; be temperate, and be wise ;
Yet courteous in thy wisdom, lightly taste :
A sparing use exhilarates, fortifies,
And dancing in the veins, repairs the waste
Of stumble, stride, and leap, strained sinew, heat
and haste.

XXI.

At length, upon the summit ridge we stand,
Whence vision strains to search the depth below :
Before, behind us, and on either hand,
Are valley, tarn and cliff—the torrent’s flow—
And mountains over-arched with pluvial bow.
These are the temple : here, to swell the song
Of Nature, thunders roar and tempests blow,
Till from mortality’s self-blinded throng
The summoned spirit soar, and heaven-ward sail along.

XXII.

“ Good is it to be here ;” the Apostle cried,
Who on the mount Messiah’s glory saw :
And good it were that we too should abide
Sequestered thus, if in religious awe,
We could from guilt as from the world withdraw,
No duty shunned, no sacrifice unpaid
To social good, to Gospel, or to Law.
But flowers of amaranth spring not in the shade,
And Faith, Hope, Charity, are but a vain parade

XXIII.

In him, whose sour abstraction to the cell
Of malcontent misanthropy retires,
Forgetting and forgotten, there to dwell,
Cumbering the ground. Far other thought inspires
High heaven, far other holocaust desires ;
And the prime record of Redemption’s plan
Gave oracle what service he requires :
For thus in Bethlehem fields the hymn began—
“ Glory to God on high, good-will and peace to man !”

XXIV.

Descend we to the world again—a fall,
Precipitate ; save here and there between,
A marshy ledge, besprent with rushes tall,
Gave change of peril. Frequent might be seen
The myrtle of the bog, whose foliage green
Steams on the grasp a cloud of fragrance rare :
So virtue when opprest hath ever been
In sight of heaven, the more approved and fair ;
A balsam beyond price, a pearl above compare.

XXV.

Our boat was ready on the wild lake's shore,
Manned with a courteous and a gallant crew :
Young Leary, skilful at the feathering oar,
And Darby Connor, trowsered spruce in blue ;
The heart into the sinews Roberts threw,
And Tehan stoutly tugged the boat along,
Though on his forehead time some furrows drew.
Cheered with the bugle, repartee and song,
Together all they pulled, a lengthened stroke and
strong.

XXVI.

Safely we steered with Fleming at the helm :
Foul shame it were, had Fleming past unsung,
The pride, the phoenix of Killarney's realm,
Cool, temperate, watchful ; on whose lips, though
 young,
Authority, and mingled kindness, hung.
Connal our minstrel was, a peerless guide,
Though law's rough saddle once his withers wrung
For hasty speech :—can ever good betide,
When passion and pooten in reason's room preside ?

XXVII.

What amplitude of mountains circling round,
How sleeps the lake beneath yon rocky wall !
Speak not ; nor breathe—let no unhallowed sound
The consecrated solitude appal :
For what though every where and over all
Omnific presence rule, unheard, unseen ?—
A sterner voice and a diviner call,
In crag and wilderness hath ever been ;
Rebuking the gay stir of vanities terrene.

XXVIII.

Condensed around the upland of the Boar, (*d*)
The vapours blacken; and the winds pipe loud :
And shagged with storm, 'mid elemental roar,
The mountain, like a giant in his shroud,
Scowls through the veil of darkness and of cloud.
Poor mortal! wilt thou dream of pomp and power—
Has glory charms? are earth and ashes proud?
Look round thee, shrink from the wide-wasting
shower;
And own thyself at most, the pageant of an hour.

XXIX.

Along the current, that meandering steals
Into the lake of Lein, we wound our way
Through grim defile, to where the eagle wheels
Round the rock-cradled mansion of his sway,
Or sun-ward culminates. In elfin play
The many-throated echoes there repeat,
From east and west, from high and low, the lay;
Swell in advance, or languish in retreat:
Sweet beyond art, beyond imagination sweet.

XXX.

But if a bold adventurer provoke
The paterero's thunderbolt of sound,
It flames—it blasts;—recoiling from the stroke,
Earth reels—the aërial ridge, the chasm profound,
Long peal of dread artillery rebound.
Turk calls on Mangerton ; and o'er the height
Of Cromagloun the battle-roar flies round,
Recedes, returns, redoubles left and right,
And all things are confusion, uproar, and affright.

XXXI.

Scared by the deafening turbulence, we fled ;
The demons of the wild, with mop and moe,
And hideous hubbub, scoffing at our dread,
And hanging on our rear. At length the foe,
Relenting into silence, let us go ;
Nor dragged us backward to their goblin den,
In that deep world of wonder and of woe ;
Where once immured in cavern or in fen,
We never more had known sun, moon, or face of men.

XXXII.

Beneath the bridge, and by the pleasant coast
Of Dinas isle, the rapids bore us down ;
The while our navigators made their boast
Of Boatman's-Hall, and fair Killarney town ;
And how, amid the pendent groves that crown
Turk's northern side, the giants dwelt of old ;
And how strange misadventure foiled the clown,
Who rashly dived to that subaqueous hold,
Where snarls the spectre hound to guard the crocks
of gold.

XXXIII.

But now, without dimension, without form,
A dark confusion overspread the day ;
Conglomeration huge of cloud and storm,
That on us pounced, like leopard on his prey,
And like a debtor dunned we scoured away.
Yet, sudden though the flurry, fierce its power,
The timely refuge of a sheltered bay
Glena bestowed ; where in umbrageous bower
Securely we contemned the pelting of the shower.

XXXIV.

Looking to where Lough Lein's thick-clustering isles
In labyrinth of loveliness are spread,
We little dreamed of fortune's wanton wiles,
Or diadem impending o'er our head.
Such the career of life : so are we led,
Unknowing wherefore, when, or whither bound,
On what new errand, what new clime to tread.
In truth and virtue certainty is found ;
All mention of it else were but an empty sound.

XXXV.

Among our company was one, whose name
Maternal marked him of a lineage rare,
Erst in Ierna, of toparchal fame,
Whose antique appellation to declare
Orthography and verse at variance are ;
Though once (unless tradition fable be)
They conquered from Killarney to Kenmare :
Whence vests in him, from that high pedigree,
Of six-and-thirty isles, the principality.

XXXVI.

But what avail us arable or down,
Till on them drop the fatness of the shower ?
Or toil and talent, till occasion crown
Their energies, and fortune grant the dower ?
The ascendant must be waited, and the hour,
Ere astrolabe detect the favouring sign ;
And even of genealogy and power,
What deem we, till their bounties warm and shine ?
Mere pearls within the shell, mere diamonds in the
mine !

XXXVII.

Such thought revolving, thus the prince began.
Strangers of England ! whose far-searching mind
Hath sent you to survey the modes of man,
What passions prompt him, and what sanctions bind
In these rude wilds—reception shall ye find,
Such as the wanderer and the guest may crave :
For we avouch, and ever have opined,
That honour is the birth-right of the brave,
And gifts distinguish best the sovereign from the slave !

XXXVIII.

Ye both are welcome, and ye both employ
Alike our care : yet let not age think blame,
If youth (for youth has longer to enjoy)
Be chosen to taste our bounty, and proclaim
To the four winds our hospitable fame.
An isle of yonder archipelago
His sceptre shall receive, and bear his name :
That we and all our ancestors may show
How well to win allies, and grace desert we know.

XXXIX.

He added not : and as his words had end,
The brightening æther gave auspicious sign ;
And the young chief-elect prepared to bend
His cares on royalty, and how to shine
The founder of a long imperial line.
Straight we embarked ; while the subsiding breeze,
The emerging sun, the temperature benign,
Foreboded quiet rule, unbroken ease ;
Invaders none without, within no rapparees.

XL.

The destined appanage (like modest worth)
Was little known; untilled as yet and bare,
Save where the red-stemmed arbutus hung forth,
Fruitage and flower at once, adorning fair
Each limestone crevice. How shall art compare
Her fading hues to that perennial green !
As well might vice and ignorance hope to share
With wisdom in the happiness serene,
That converse holds in heaven, and looks to things
unseen.

XLI.

Anon we landed ; and the unconscious isle
Received its future lord, and took his name
With ceremonial given and mingled stile
Of Erse and Latian tongue, as well became
Killarney's lettered sept, and classic fame.
Then was libation made : and three times three,
The cheers of loyalty and loud acclame,
Taught lake and mountain to repeat with glee,
Prosperity and peace to that new dynasty !

XLII.

The investiture, in record duly penned,
That night the donor's coronal must grace ;
And each a twig of arbutus must bend,
And on his brow the verdant chaplet place,
In reverence and memorial. Erin's race
With fanciful fond pastime thus recal,
Of domination past each fleeting trace,
That in secluded walk, or crowded hall,
May soothe their solitude, or glad their carnival.

XLIII.

A lofty race they are, of kindred soul
To the hot sun; yet listening in delight,
And homage, to persuasion's mild control :
But he who thwarts them, or invades their right,
Had better beard a lion in his might.
Strong as the bison, agile as the roe,
Prompt in the gibe, and prompter in the fight;
To benefit a friend, or quell a foe,
Through pain, toil, peril, fire, and water will they go.

XLIV.

The day declines : a lengthening dusk is thrown
Along the lake, on castle, rock, and glade,
Saddening the hue of Rabbit Island brown,
And Inisfallen's wilderness of shade;
And where the truant imp, the frolic blade,
Whom 'Paddy Blake' the men of Kerry call,
Lurks by the tower of Ross in ambuscade,
Mocks instrument of speech, song, laughter, brawl,
Gives audience day and night, and challenges from all

XLV.

Accepts ; and, after grave deliberate pause,
Each inarticulate or articulate sound
Rehearses, note by note, or clause by clause ;
And laughs to hear philosophy profound
The causes of his merriment expound.
Yet is he but an atom of the chain,
In which the circling elements are bound
By Him whose fiat framed, whose hands sustain
Earth and the firmament, and multitudinous main.

XLVI.

Our voyage done, awhile upon the strand
In meditation mark we the serene
Of soft religious twilight, mantling land
And water, the gray cliff, the forest green,
In melancholy and gloom, till all between
Be mingled with the horizon towering high,
Save (where the lake's dark windings intervene)
In rude inverted grandeur we espy
The solemn mountain-wall reflected to the sky.

XLVII.

Meantime, in majesty from pole to pole
Progressing, the magnificence of night
Illumines one by one, and bids to roll
From orient to the west, the infinite
Of stellar fires. So, when all earth's delight
Is darkened and withdrawn, Faith lends her wing,
New worlds, new paradises bless the sight,
And angel hierarchies are heard to sing,
Where lamps in emblem burn before the Eternal King.

XLVIII.

Nor angels only ; every orb a voice
Re-echoes : ocean, air, and the dry ground,
The sun and moon, the day and night rejoice ;
Wind, storm, and time, and seasons in their round
Fulfil his bidding, and his praise resound.
And if, beneath the shadow of death, where pine
Sorrow and sin, if thus, even there, be found
A glimpse, an image of the bliss divine ;
If through mortality's thick cloud such radiance shine,

XLIX.

What then shall be the glory when the alloy
Of sense and appetite, of guilt and fear,
At once dissolving into life and joy,
Lets in the vision of the empyreal sphere,
The blaze of heaven's irrevoluble year ?
Such on the banks of Jordan was the flight
Of fiery steeds and chariot, the career
Of whirlwind bearing from Elisha's sight
His master, to the throne of inexpressive light.

L.

Perchance we murmur at our scanty dole
Of knowledge, and would foreign climes explore ;
Invade the frozen desert of the pole,
Or breath the fragrance of Arabia's shore ;
Or search the sculptured mountains of Ellore ;
On Himalaya tempt the secret hall
Of Typhon, and the death-winged thunder's roar,
With summer fly round this terraqueous ball,
And keep each month alike the sun's bright festival.

LI.

But nobler were it, from Jove's moons to view
His huge circumference filling all the sky,
The darkling flight of Uranus pursue,
And if above such height ascending high,
Some exiled planet undiscovered lie,
On that strange watch-tower to sit specular,
Or on the comet ride infinity,
And wandering o'er creation, see from far
The glorious orb of day diminished to a star.

LII.

Even this were little—to the just is given
A loftier range, a kingdom more sublime ;
The inviolable sanctuary of heaven,
Where never doubt, nor ignorance, nor crime,
Where never sorrow or dismay can climb.
Transfigured into light, they leave below
The narrow boundaries of space and time,
And up the everlasting mountains go,
Where bliss unutterable, nor pause, nor end shall
know.

END OF DAY FIRST.

KILLARNEY.



DAY SECOND.

KILLARNEY.

DAY SECOND.

I.

FITLY the patriarch sought the inspiring power
Of meditation at the close of day ;
And mystery hath marked it for the hour
Of sacrifice, wherein to watch and pray.
Then angel visitation made assay
Of Abraham's faith and hospitable rite,
Then rested the Creator to survey
The six days' work maturing in his sight,
The illuminated, formed, and peopled infinite.

II.

Even the gay worldling feels the touch of awe,
While in repose the winds and waters lie,
While day, and all day's vanities withdraw,
And as the twilight muffles earth and sky,
Colour and form, and sound and motion die :
For in that gloom and stillness is the sign
Of adoration, mute, yet heard on high,
Praise universal to the Power divine,
Creation bending low before Jehovah's shrine.

III.

But what of time or place ? It is the fire
Within the heart, lights up the jubilee
Of faith and hope. The prophet could retire
Each day, undaunted by the king's decree,
From care, from Babylon, from empire free.
With foes and danger compassed round, even then,
Though death was in the act, he bent the knee,
Indifferent to the praise or blame of men,
The burning fiery furnace, or the lion's den.

IV.

When sail the constellations and the moon
Along the depth of midnight atmosphere,
Or when the full resplendency of noon
Oppresses vision, Him acknowledge there,
Who light and dark distributes, month and year ;
On him alone in heaven and earth rely,
Him without change, and without end revere,
Enthroned above all domination high,
Unknown, yet ever felt ; unseen, yet ever nigh.

V.

Nor less we find a language in the morn,
A monitor in the return of day,
An emblem in the joy to be new born
From darkness to the sun's all-cheering ray,
In every sight and sound a call to pay
The matin orison. Let heart and head,
Let hand and voice that oracle obey :
Give every thought to heaven ; and from the bed
Of indolence arise, as rising from the dead.

VI.

This done, beneath the sylvan colonnade,
That eastward skirts the lake, we wind along ;
Screened by an avenue of chequered shade,
Green as the groves of oriental song,
Where Caliphs wander, or where Genii throng
The bowers of Paradise. How bright a gleam
Incessant flickers the dusk leaves among :
So Heaven accords an interposing beam
Of mercy and of truth to life's lugubrious dream.

VII.

Fair stream of Flesk ! but mutable as fair,
Dependent on the chances of an hour ;
This moment mild, translucent, debonair,
The next, impatient of the storm and shower,
All foam and fury, turbulence and power.
How dost thou picture forth our joy and woe,
Virtues that bless, and passions that devour ;
Till comes the last and liberating throe,
And round about the streets the pomps of mourn-
ing go !

VIII.

Welcome the close peninsular recess,
Whose groves and thickets from the heat invite ;
Whose cool, whose dew, whose quietude, we bless,
Impervious to the sun's meridian height,
Each thickening shade increasing the delight.
Sour ringlets there betray the fairy hand,
The foot-print and the gambol of each sprite,
That greets the moon by water or by land,
Dances on lawn, or skims the furrows of the strand.

IX.

But hush—and either name them not at all,
(For best they love a reverence taciturn),
Or “neighbours” them, or “the good people” call:
For once provoked, they quick retort the spurn ;
Spavin thy cattle, or thy corn-ricks burn ;
For thee in pale sublunar foray prowl,
And toss thee on the tempest of the churn,
Hang thee like bacon-flitch in smoke to howl,
Or roast thee like a crab, and plunge in gossip's bowl.

X.

They love in cavern or in mine to dwell,
They love upon the hurricane to ride ;
Or wander fog-borne over moor and fell,
Or from the beetling promontory glide,
To look for shipwrecks on the heaving tide.
Lay, legend, cry of Banshee, they prolong,
Peopling with echoes every mountain side ;
And breathe the spells of poetry and song,
In melodies that mourn and die the clouds among.

XI.

But longer in such reverie to rove
Befits not, near the consecrated pile,
That chastening with religious awe the grove,
To penitence and mourning gave asyle
In ages past from misery and from guile.
A symbol of hereafter, of repose
Where sorrow cannot wound, nor sin defile :
Forgiven and forgotten all our foes ;
The trial past, and joy unspeakable the close.

XII.

'Thy towers, forsaken Mucruss ! to the poor
Were once of hospitable aid the sign,
And, daily crowding through yon ample door
In serried files, came pilgrims to the shrine.
But time at leisure now may undermine
The pillar, and deface the mouldering wall,
And every pinnacle with ivy twine :
'The burial rite alone remains of all
That once was crosier, chant, high-mass and festival.

XIII.

And who can blame the peasant if he mourn
Even yet in fond remembrance of the past ;
If even in death he cling to the sojourn
Of all his ancestors, or wish at last
His own remains beside them may be cast ?
And if he think the virtue of such grave
May shorten purgatory's fiery fast,
Pity his error, and its pardon crave
From Him who reigns above, Omnipotent to save !

XIV.

Look through the portal—nave and choir, and tomb,
Stained with the damp, and strewn with many a
bone,
And wrapt at every step in denser gloom,
To silence and to solitude bemoan
Their fallen estate : one narrow arch alone,
At utmost distance, marks with feeble ray,
The sanctuary's recess, and chiselled stone.
So through the dun obscure of life we stray,
Yet welcome at the end a gleam of heavenly day.

XV.

What groans of dole and penance once dismayed
Yon cloister, buried from the sun and air,
Beneath the central yew-tree's giant shade!
Here hath the guilt-o'erburdened solitaire
Mused, till remorse was deepened to despair :
Here saints have fought their agonizing fight,
With anguish and temptation, doubt and care,
Till in the beatific trance of light
The world and the world's woe vanished from their
sight.

XVI.

The grass grows rankly, and the saplings wave
O'er hall and dormitory, porch and cell ;
Each passage is a den, each aisle a cave :
But who shall tempt the vaults, or dare to tell
What inmates there of unknown horror dwell ?
How sighs the breeze, how languishes the day ;
What tenderness, what pain in the farewell
To these dismantled gates and turrets gray,
Once dedicate to heaven, still reverend in decay.

XVII.

But hence we must—it yet remains to scale
The mountain, ere obstruction intervene
Of haze or tempest ; gradual from the vale
We mount, and gradual fades the smooth moist
 green
To rough, adust, and barren. So between
Ambition's early toil and late success
No path is to be found of peace serene :
The more our eminence, the comfort less,
Till the whole world at length be one drear wilderness.

XVIII.

What change upon the hills ! unclouded now,
On the pure bosom of the sky reclined ;
Now in a moment round each furrowed brow
With what a chain invisible they bind
The vapours borne beside them on the wind ;
Then cast the mantle off, then closer draw,
Above, below, before them, and behind,
Till all be turbulence, and winter's flaw,
Such as on Appenine the Punic chieftain saw,

XIX.

And owned the ruin of the Alps outdone,
Yet still the darkness fluctuates : and again
Like a vast curtain rises, while the sun,
Looking abroad in victory, pours amain
The deluge of his beams o'er lake and plain.
So when the tempter prompts, and passions fell
Make war on duty, frenzy clouds the brain,
Till the bright Sun of righteousness dispel
The foul distemperature, and all again be well.

XX.

Up Mangerton we go : from prospect wide
To wider, and from pure to purer air,
The horizon opening as the hills subside,
And distance softening down the rude and bare,
As hope and memory picture all things fair.
Buoyed up with expectation and with glee,
We take no thought of labour or of care,
The spirits lighter, and the limbs more free,
And half the burden dropped of gross mortality.

XXI.

Nor pause we, till the crater's edge we gain,
The goblet named of Lucifer ; a mound
Of curving precipice, wherein the drain
From cloud and fountain feeds the pool profound
That mantles in the midst. Here let the sound
Of bugle to blithe echo wind the call :
And, hark ! the repercussive heights around,
Harmonious in contention, answer all ;
And long vibrations ring through their ærial hall.

XXII.

One effort more, and highest of the high,
Near the rude cairn, we breathe empyreal air :
Above, the deep cerulean of the sky,
Beneath, a boundless cirque of prospect fair ;
Turk, and the Reeks, and Iveragh's ridges bare,
Lakes, rivers, meadows, woods, and mountains blue,
Bantry and Castlemaine, and wild Kenmare ;
Till on th' horizon, outline, site, and hue,
Together blending, fade in dusk and doubt from view.

XXIII.

Pausing at every step, along the ridge
That over-hangs the concave on we stray,
Till now the rugged rampart like a bridge
Bestrides vacuity, and leads the way
Where right and left, astounded we survey
The vast abruption. Reconnoitring slow
Lest the steep verge thy careless feet betray,
Behold the horse's glen ; approach the brow,
Recoil not, shrink not from the fearful depth below,

XXIV.

But brace each nerve and cast a downward eye,
Where'mid the chasm, engulfed in waste and gloom,
Far, far beneath, the dismal waters lie,
And all around them, rock and heath and broom
Usurp dominion, leaving scanty room
Between the tarn and crag for one soft green
Of pasturage in the shattered wreck of doom
And deluge, where the ravages are seen
Of vengeance yet ; where peace and hope have never
 been.

XXV.

Look ; but for safety to the heather cling :
Forbear discourse, and let no lighter tone
Of melody invoke the mountain king,
(f) But one deep supplicating sigh alone
Be breathed ;—he hears,—he answers,—the low
 groan
Of wild re-murmured sorrow awes the dell :
Again, more faint, the melancholy moan
Is heard of loneliness and fear to tell ;
And fainter yet again scarce whispers the farewell.

XXVI.

It is a sadness like the dying beam
Of day, the knell when passing spirits go ;
The strangely-blent vagaries of a dream,
Where present, past and future, friend and foe,
The near, the distant, hurry to and fro,
Mingling in shapes that earth can never yield,
Vicissitude and voyage, weal and woe:
Brief images of things from knowledge sealed
Of mortals, yet in part and shadow thus revealed.

XXVII.

Even here, in devastation and dismay,
The love of lucre, strong as death, detains
A thrifty hermitess, who day by day
From cream's rich unctuousness the serum drains,
And prints ambrosial butter, on the plains
Beside Kingsale, or Cork's famed city sold.
The seasons and their change, the winds and rains,
The moisture and the drought, the heat and cold,
And solitude like death, all please in hope of gold.

XXVIII.

Behold her walking on the water's brink,
To where her kine seek herbage in the glen :
The roots her food, the mountain-dew her drink,
The caverned rock her magazine and den,
And little her desire for help of men,
Herself can work the churn, and scour the pail,
The docile herd herself can milk and pen ;
And all her thoughts are handicraft and sale,
Till winter's tyranny dislodge her to the vale.

XXIX.

Day wears apace ; no longer here sojourn :
The circuit of the crater's rim complete,
And to the stony entrance back return,
Whence borne on indefatigable feet
A world of youthful parasites, with sweet
Cajolery paged us down the mountain side.
But when their candied flattery failed to meet
The silver guerdon, changing note they cried,
“ Bad luck to you ; and shame such stinginess betide.”

XXX.

Down to the bay umbrageous of Dundalk
Repair we, where the boat and banquet wait ;
There, carelessly diffused in sylvan walk,
Share we provision with our crew, and prate
Of peace and politics, of war and state ;
Wealthy and high-born cavalcadors see,
Yet count our own of all the happiest fate :
For what to us are fortune and degree ?
No poet so entranced, no king so great as we !

XXXI.

But converse must have end — the sun declines,
And ancient saws instruct us to take note
Of profit by his presence when he shines.
Thus warned, we quit refection for the boat,
Push off, and joy to be again afloat ;
While, like the men of Athens, we pursue
Whate'er is found of novel and remote,
The conscious spirit straining to the view
Of worlds invisible, where all things shall be new.

XXXII.

Athwart the Middle-Lake our course we shape,
By many a wooded creek and lonely bay,
And rock strange-hollowed, and strange-cloven cape,
That gently meet us, gently slide away,
Like dreams departing at the break of day ;
The while from our associates fable old
We glean of earthly and unearthly fray,
Mines where imprisoned goblins dig for gold,
And spells that never must to mortal ears be told.

XXXIII.

Alas! that cold oblivion should inurn
Too oft the glory with the mortal frame,
And scarce an echo from the grave return
Of all the toil, the triumph and acclame,
And ancients' power, and deeds of fame.
Each cave, each headland as we glide along,
Of hero, or of saint records the name,
And all around us the memorials throng
Of conquest, monarchy, and war, and poet's song.

XXXIV.

What pomp of verdure from each height descends,
Grove falling under grove, from steep to steep,
Till the thick foliage with the water blends,
Circling the shore in one continuous sweep,
And sinks into the bosom of the deep,
There mingling with the faint reflected gleam
Of clouds, that on the calm of evening sleep.
So down into the grave we from the dream
Of earth descend, to meet eternal glory's beam.

XXXV.

At length appears the outlet, to a span
Contracting suddenly the waters wide,
Where works pontifical, of modest plan,
From island to peninsular-woodland stride,
Beneath whose solitary arch we glide,
And issuing on the Lake of Lein, behold
The vapours settling on the mountain side,
All change of figure and of hue unfold ;
Fanes, cities, palaces of adamant and gold.

XXXVI.

North-westerly our course : while on the left
Glena's wild nemorosities repeat
Each bugle note ; till where of shade bereft,
The double peaks of 'Toomies' tower, they meet,
They mix with kindred resonances sweet,
Retiring to the realms of upper air,
And lessening die.—Not so the strains that greet
The soul heaven-mounting from the den of care,
The conscience without guile, the heart that burns in
prayer.

XXXVII.

Sequestered loveliness ! how stretch around
The sylvan undulations far and wide,
With what magnificence of shade profound,
What prodigality of pomp and pride,
O'er lawn and up the precipice they glide :
And far above, in majesty austere,
What altitudes of rock the cloud divide,
Challenge the tempest, and delight to hear
The thunder and the wind in baffled rage career.

XXXVIII.

Landing, we plunge into the ascending glade
That clammers to the torrent's angry leap,
Surnamed of old 'O'Sullivan's Cascade.'
It roars, it sparkles : cautiously we creep
To where, half bending o'er the giddy steep,
We gaze upon the never-ceasing flow
That shakes the forest ; headlong to the deep
Precipitated from the bosky brow :
All shade and gloom above, all flash and foam below.

XXXIX.

But now the winds and waters utter moan
Presageful of commotion : downward bend
The labouring clouds ; the promontories groan ;
Low murmurs from each glen and cave ascend
Responsive ; the far-spreading vapours blend
In shapelessness of dusk, cloud, water, shore,
Lost in the haze promiscuous without end ;
And time is to be gone, ere danger more
Environ our retreat, ere with a deepening roar

XL.

The tempest and confusion worse confound
The lurid gloom. In loftier ridges swell
The billows ; and with long continuous sound
The surges wild and wilder whirlwinds tell,
With what a gust they in commotion mell.
Faint gleams amid the darkness show the spray
In eddies borne along the tumult fell :
Extinct is the last lingering spark of day,
And the moon hides her face in sorrow and dismay.

XLI.

O for the vision of the sceptred sage
That never comes but with a guardian power
Amid the wreck of elemental rage,
Amid tornadoes when they blackest lour,
Amid the waves just opening to devour.
Whate'er the changes or the chances be,
The dread or danger, gracious is the hour
And omen, his meteorous light to see
On tower of Aghadoe, or Inisfallen's lee.

XLII.

Joy—joy!—behold the venerable form,
The sainted king uplift his placid brow ;
From vulgar sight enshrouded in the storm,
Or seeming as the waves that dash below.
The gifted eye alone hath power to know
What sovereign, in what guise delights to roam ;
What hope, what comfort from his presence flow :
For when, emerging from his watery home,
He reins the courser white that prances o'er the foam,

XLIII.

The billows and the winds forbear to roar,
Or roar unheeded, impotent to harm.
A mighty potentate was he of yore,
And knew full well oppression to disarm
By law, and equity, and virtue's charm :
Where due, he lavished bounty and renown,
But from his palace drove the flatterer swarm
That bask in smiles and wither at a frown,
And fawn, and lie, and think all glory in a crown.

XLIV.

One day, amid the banquet and the hall,
He rose, and vented wild prophetic strain,
Borne on a cloud forsook the festival,
And plunged into the bosom of the main.
Yet privilege was given him to regain
At will these upper regions, there anew
To spread the blessings of his ancient reign,
And bid high fortune wait upon the few,
Who in the needful hour such apparition view.

XLV.

Even now the gale before him sinks, while chide
The surges with less tumult on the shore;
And safely by the Prison-Isle we glide,
Or where on Cherry-Reef the billows roar:
And now again the treasury we explore
Of record, rumour, elves, and magic wand,
And Erin's rich traditionary store.
Time thus beguiled, all unawares to land
We come, and grounding boat, leap out upon the
strand.

XLVI.

Beneath the battlements of Ross our bark
We leave, and ruminating home return,
Kindling with more than a Promethean spark,
Thoughts like Sidonian Cynosure, that burn
Amid th' obscurity of life's sojourn ;
How war, and trumpet, and the minstrel's chime,
Must all lie mute in monumental urn,
And how beyond the grave we soar sublime
Into the Paradise of heaven's empyreal clime.

XLVII.

How yearns ethereal essence to transcend
The limits of mortality and clay ;
What rapture in the half-belief we lend
To tales of wizard eld, and phantom gray,
The Runic rhyme, the legendary lay :
What bliss in dreams emancipate to glide
Through present, past and future ; to survey
The secrets buried under ocean's tide,
Or to new labyrinth of worlds o'er chaos ride.

XLVIII.

Yet be not long a loiterer in the maze
Where sleep deludes, or fiction : the supreme
In joy is on the majesty to gaze
Of truth, and from the world's delirious dream
Awake into the pure authentic beam
Of faith ; and onward press (as strength is given),
Thought gradual following thought, theme following
 theme,
And cast away th' intoxicating leaven
Of crude philosophy for manna sent from heaven.

XLIX.

There is a sanctuary (howe'er unknown
To the world's worshipper) from doubt and care ;
There is a palm of triumph, and a crown
That may be won by violence of prayer :
And meditation, like the mystic stair
In Bethel, upward leads from earth below,
To where immortal choirs the praise declare
Of Him at whose right hand the rivers flow
Of peace and joy that fill the Everlasting Now.

L.

No more cherubic visitants descend,
As once at Mahanaim, or the hill
Of Dothan, in corporeal shape to tend
The patriarch and the prophet, or fulfil
On cities, hosts, and realms th' Almighty will;
Yet still repenting sinners they behold
With joy, and guard through tribulation still
The white-robed multitude, the sacred fold,
Of whom th' Apocalypse by elder's voice hath told.

LI.

And though the dread Triune for ever dwell
Beyond creation, beyond depth and height,
Beyond all knowledge, inaccessible,
Pavilioned in the majesty and light
Of his own beams; yet from that temple bright
His mercy looks, illumining the wise,
And piloting the watchful, till from night
And death they to th' eternal morning rise,
From earth's discordant din to angel harmonies.

LII.

There, kindling into ecstasy, the soul
Shall from perfection to perfection soar,
And years and centuries by millions roll,
While saints, sublimed to seraphim, adore
(As knowledge widens) ever more and more :
And still the triumphings that never end
Are but beginning on that blissful shore
Where glory and delight in union blend,
And in perpetual flight above all heavens ascend.

END OF DAY SECOND.

KILLARNEY.



DAY THIRD.

KILLARNEY.

DAY THIRD.

I.

BLOW, tempest—thunder, roll ; ye suit the gloom :
And if ye startle luxury from sleep,
Ye but awake him to remember doom,
Ye but forewarn him (lest oblivion creep
Upon his vigil) to repent and weep.
Dull world, bestir thee ; kneel at mercy's shrine,
Ere retribution the dread harvest reap,
And answer none vouchsafe to prayer of thine,
Save the wrath fulminant, and chastisement divine.

II.

How turbulent the night's capricious change
From calm to storm, from darkness to the beam
Of moon illumining the wondrous range
Of mountain, rock, and wood : what lightnings
gleam,
What clouds and meteors on th' horizon stream,
What whistling of the winds, what pelting shower,
Forbidding sleep, or vexing sleep with dream
Of din, turmoil and peril, and the hour
When hags come forth to ban, and monsters to devour.

III.

Arise, and into the fresh morn repair ;
Fresh morn how fragrant after such unrest,
Though little we espy of augury fair
Amid the storms that from each mountain crest
Roll downward to the valley, and invest
With equal haze the cliff and dingle green,
Long-Range, and Purple-Mount, and Eagle's-Nest,
Whose rugged fronts more terrible are seen,
And strike a deeper dread through clouds that inter-
vene.

IV.

The stags that browze the forest, in bravado
Their antlers lock, half anger and half play ;
Nor dream how soon, aroused by ambuscado
Of hound, of huntsman, and of gentles gay,
They must o'erswim the flood, or stand at bay :
So merciful is heaven (though few receive
Aright what reason and sound doctrine say),
Each creature thus in ignorance to leave
Of casualty to come, lest premature they grieve.

V.

What gained the king of Israel, when he went
To learn at Endor (by unlawful art
Of wizard and familiar) war's event ?
What balm could the prophetic voice impart
For wounded conscience, and a broken heart ?
Enough the present : who would live again
His past of being ? why invoke the dart
Of future ill, anticipate the chain,
Or woo, before the time, captivity and pain ?

VI.

Then be not like the monarch ; but repose
On heaven thy care, with not a wish to view
The future — look but to the final close ;
And day by day, and night by night renew
The services of adoration due.
Leave others the diviner's art to try ;
But thou thine even, onward course pursue,
In boisterous or serene, in moist or dry,
As moves the sun alike through bright or cloudy sky.

VII.

Our moralizing done, return we home,
Where ceaselessly bells ring and customers call ;
Such banquet is in Gorham's ample dome,
Of race and stag-hunt such the festival.
The wanderer who had hoped in lonely hall
To loiter, and in lonely peace explore
The rocks and islands, groves and valleys all ;
Hears with affright the stentorophonic roar
Of landlord, waiter, guest, augmenting ever more

VIII.

The many-throated harmonies of morn,
Each urban and suburban ear that greet,
The thunder of the wheels, the mail-guard's horn,
Steeds, donkies, coaches, tempesting the street,
Rattle of cudgels, tramp of countless feet,
Hoofed, brogued, or bare: carts rumbling o'er the
stones,
Curs, children, pigs, the hurly to complete,
And jaunting-cars that dislocate the bones,
And sallow mendicants, that mingle gibes with moans.

IX.

Pipes, hurdy-gurdies, trumpets, drums, astound
The crowds that every where confusedly run,
While swarm into the town from all around,
Jockey and Greek, and reeling ripe for fun
Or fight, tall lads whose shouts the welkin stun;
Till the grave magistrate steps in between,
Whose voice, whose frown, whose *Mittimus* they
shun :
For why ? the constables are near him seen,
And files of armed police in uniform of green.

X.

Kind genius of the desert ! interpose,
And lead us car-borne to thy bower on high,
Where rock and solitude may round us close,
And meditation to the world may die.
Caparison the horse, and let us fly,
Unheeding wind or rain : nor madly stay
Where strife preludes to challenge, and each eye
Glares like a comet, boding feud and fray :
Push on into the storm—the storm less wild than they.

XI.

As by St. Withold from the bosom driven
The night-mare and her ninefold brood retire,
And ecstasies unknown before are given,
New strength we feel, new faculties acquire,
All life and bliss and intellectual fire ;
So, as we sally forth, the shout, the song,
The yelp, the buz, the dissonance expire ;
And the companions sole that round us throng
Are thoughts that more to Paradise than earth belong.

XII.

If silence thus be melody, and ease
Be luxury, disincarcerated to rove,
And listen to the rustling leaves, the breeze
That soothes, the birds that vocalize the grove,
The Flesk, that murmurs like the widowed dove ;
Think what the triumph and the jubilee
Of souls dismissed from earth to heaven above,
For ever happy and for ever free
Expatriating, and heirs of immortality.

XIII.

The darkness and the gloominess behold
Of morn upon the mountains, where the shade
Of clouds along the dusky regions rolled,
Half hiding, and revealing half, hath made
A wilderness of night on copse and glade,
And all the frowning dreariness around ;
Where sight is baffled and the heart afraid
To look on that obscurity profound,
Or enterprize approach to that forbidden ground.

XIV.

Such darkness veiled th' Avenger who destroyed
The vaunted armies of th' Assyrian king ;
Such darkness brooded o'er the formless void
Ere yet the overshadowing Spirit his wing
Outspread, ere yet the light began to spring ;
Such darkness hung o'er man ; till love divine
The victory from the grave, from death the sting
Despoiled, and bade on Calvary the sign
Of mastery o'er the world and that old Serpent shine.

XV.

Along the lake, and up the giddy side
Of Turk, in depth dimensionless extend
The woodlands, towering high and spreading wide
In one unbroken verdure without end,
Mantle the slope, the precipice ascend
Above the clouds that in mid æther sail.
And though ten thousand charms of beauty blend
With that stern grandeur, yet the cheek turns pale,
And as we gaze, the pulse throbs quick, the spirits
quail.

XVI.

But who are they that mustering up the storm
Engarrison the gorge of yon defile,
And on the pendant hills encampment form,
Prohibiting access ? What shall beguile
Their fury, or what covert grant asyle ?
With widening front their legions they outspread,
With murkier horror gloom on gloom they pile,
Cast night before, brew tempest overhead,
And mingle heaven and earth in darkness and in dread.

XVII.

Glena and all his giant neighbours fade,
Enveloped one by one in vapour foul
Till total overwhelmed : then wrapt in shade
Rush down the fiends : the clouds in volumes roll,
Vancouriers to the thunder's distant growl,
From rock and heath the showers in smoke rebound,
The cataracts dash, the frightened forests howl ;
The horse, bewildered and aghast, turns round,
The driver and his fare sit helpless and half-drowned.

XVIII.

Rough music this of elemental war,
Now feigning intermission, now again
Redoubled, calling echo from afar
To summon all the magazines of rain,
Sleet, hail, and hurricane, that spout amain
Storm after storm, each heavier than the last,
Shaking the hills, and deluging the plain
In aggravated chaos : earth aghast
Groans in Egyptian dark, and shrinks beneath the
blast.

XIX.

Still toward Kenmare we toil, to where the road
Hewn through the rock in canopy of proof
And gallery grotto-like, might seem th' abode
Of hospitable fairy ; while aloof
Stand gust and shower, to let the weary hoof
Of steed or man rest quiet underground.
We entered : and beneath that vaulted roof
Ensconced a goodly company we found ;
And salutation frank of courtesy went round.

XX.

What zest, what solace in the covert given
By Oberon here or Archimago's wand,
That through the crag such corridor hath riven
So soothe our toil. Ah ! let the heart expand
To see how marshalled by th' Omnific hand,
The hopes that elevate, the fears that quell,
In order due of alternation stand :
Pain, lest our pride wax wanton, and rebel ;
And comfort, lest the heart o'ercharged to bursting
swell.

XXI.

Not long we tarry here : our course is bent
To where the crags of Eagle's-Nest denote
A rendezvous ; the car is homeward sent ;
Ourselves, enveloped close in cloak or coat,
(Like tortoise in its shell) expect the boat ;
While tempest after tempest sweeping fast
Swells with Typhoëan roar his angry throat.
In fissured rock we harbour from the blast ;
Should winter's self assail, he must relent at last.

XXII.

Thus perdu couched, we mark the straggling throng
Car-mounted or equestrian, the gay world
Of Kerry, troop storm-buffeted along,
Their high top-gallants to the gale unfurled,
Quaint caps awry, quaint chevelures uncurled,
Maugre the o'ernight's industry to fold
The ringlet, round and round in paper twirled.
Alas ! the draggled victims to behold ;
How shrinking from the wet, how shivering with the
cold !

XXIII.

But this and more, will under name of sport
And hunting of the roe, be gladly borne ;
Like rout, assembly, etiquette of court,
Which, but for pomp and name, were woe forlorn.
The sluggard hath arisen at early morn,
The slattern pranked herself in trim attire,
The dainty dame of tax-cart thought no scorn,
The tippler left his can, the bard his lyre,
Such philther hath the chase, such puissance hath desire.

XXIV.

No need there is of courser here ; and few
O'er precipice and bog, through briar and brake,
The track of huntsman or of hound pursue ;
But far along the road procession make,
Or on the water side their station take,
Or wiser still (if weather smile serene)
Launch on the tranquil bosom of the Lake,
Whence every where rock, mountain, wood, and
green,
Dog, sportsman, militaire, and beaux and belles are seen.

XXV.

The storms abate, the boat arrives ; the hour
Is nigh ; the shouts from cliff to cliff resound.
See the scared eagle from his eyry tower
Aloft, on wide-spread pinions circling round,
Bidding the desert to his scream resound,
While angrily he chides the clamorous train
That violate his solitude profound,
Marring with idle luxury, tumult vain,
The kingly contemplations of his ancient reign.

XXVI.

O restlessness of man, that cannot leave
In peace the field, the river, and the wood !
O vacancy of thought, that must deceive
Life's tedium with false images of good !
Were the true source of blessing understood,
Such darkness would be lost in radiance bright
From Tabor mountain or from Jordan's flood ;
Celestial visions would illumine the night,
Thoughts redolent of heaven attend returning light.

XXVII.

List !—hear we not the cry of hound and horn
Amid the glens, upon the mountain's breast,
Heart-stirring as the feathered choirs of morn
When thrush and lark the prize of song contest,
And sweet as evening's lullabies of rest ?
The sentimentalist may word it well,
The Stoic or the Cynic frown or jest ;
But in that harmony there is a spell
To countermine the wise, and reason's self to quell.

XXVIII.

How the wild music undulates along
Yon rocky channel ; now remote, now near !
What expectation silences the throng,
Listening the peal that fainter or more clear
At length with swelling chorus fills our ear !
The heart beats audible : the doubling call
Bids each in ambush wait th' approaching deer :
Some line the copse, some in the herbage crawl,
Some crouch in boat ; all eye, all ear, impatience all.

XXIX.

He comes !—he comes !—be ready with the boat :
The very crisis of your fate is nigh :
Let him but plunge ; then seize him while afloat,
And with loud shouts proclaim the victory !
Shame—shame,—we showed ourselves too soon :
his eye
Hath marked us ; and he seeks a distant shore.
Of rage and mutual blame then rose the cry ;
And (much I fear me) even our cockswain swore,
Who never after did, nor ever did before.

XXX.

The game hath taken soil, and lost to view
Securely stems the wave ; nor will a hound,
Till thrown into the stream, the chase renew.
Too late revive they there, too late have found
Cold puzzling scent, and vainly quest around
The further shore. In safety's jubilee
The quarry, far ahead, hath come to ground,
Swallows the plain, and scales the steep with glee,
Once more the denizen of Turk and liberty !

XXXI.

But, hark ! a second cry denotes the pack
Divided, and foretels a second chance.
He comes !—the dogs close hanging on his track :
The lolling tongue, dun hide, and slow advance
Betray his toil : observe with wary glance
His plunge ; surround him, grasp his antlered brow,
And let the past mishap our joy enhance.
Exultingly we wave white banner now,
And high in air our arbutus-wreathed bonnets throw.

XXXII.

Resign him to the huntsman, and admire
His huge dimensions, and his branching head :
He seems the forest's venerable sire,
Or monarch who their armies long had led,
Though at his utmost need, the recreants fled.
Now finds he life and empire but a span,
While hood-winked he reclines, fast bound, half
 dead,
And yielding to the mighty power of man,
Patient awaits his death, as patient as he can.

XXXIII.

Yet nothing fear : thou art a captive king,
And of a king the treatment shall be thine :
Not long the bandages shall round thee cling,
Nor shalt thou long in doubt and durance pine.
Heave not, nor look so piteously : resign
Awhile to bonds and fate : a prospect fair,
A brighter destiny shall quickly shine,
And to thy native woods thou shalt repair,
To range the mountain free, free as the mountain air.

XXXIV.

Meantime regatta-like in gallant show
Of boats with cabin or with awning gay,
We glide along the straits in lengthened row,
Or crescent-wise expand in opening bay.
Above them all, conspicuous in array
Of sumptuous gala, like a conqueror's car,
A stately barge divides the liquid way,
Where sits the lovely Countess, from afar
Diffusing light and joy like some benignant star.

XXXV.

I name her not (though worthy to be sung
By bard of olden time as Faëry Queen
Hight Gloriana), though her crown be hung
On high, entwined with palms of deathless green.
The seraph path she walks, but walks unseen ;
Nor dare I desecrate with earthly fame
One so in virtue shrined and faith serene :
Nor am I fitting to record the name
Which want and sorrow bless, and angels shall proclaim.

XXXVI.

Glena ! let all thy fastnesses expand
On the freed prisoner refuge to bestow.
He starts—he springs into the flood—for land
He makes, and is once more a king ! see now
With what a grandeur, what a grace his brow
He shakes, and rides upon the wave. Yet more
Elate he touches ground, bursts through the row
Of nets that, casual left, obstruct the shore,
Bounds to the wood and thinks of trouble past no
more.

XXXVII.

Scarce with such joy the Gallic monarch fled,
Escaping from the durance vile of Spain,
Bestrode the Turkish courser, felt his head
Encircled with the regal crown again,
And to Bayona sped in huge disdain.
Long rankled that immedicable wound
Of outraged majesty : through years of pain
Imperial Charles by sad experience found
What policy it were, had equity set bound

XXXVIII.

To lust of empire. Tyranny and pride
That grapple all, set all upon a cast ;
And giant power that earth and heaven defied,
Struggles, like shipwrecked seamen on a mast,
For life, not victory ; and sinks at last.
But Lazarus at the gate enjoys within
The peace that, after brief probation past,
Shall progress of immortal joy begin,
While through eternity resound the groans of sin.

XXXIX.

Our day's disport is done : but wouldest thou hear
Th' halloo of other worlds, far different hour
Thou must await, to fast in station drear
Of lonely beach, and watch the cloudy power
That builds the mist into a signal-tower
For things invisible. There let the spell
Of high-wrought fantasy thy thought imbower
Within that interlunar dark where dwell
The wonders which no tongue hath leave or power to
tell.

XL.

Sad privilege (and therefore given to few)
To pry upon the secrets of the dead:
Bethink thee, lest the heavy price thou rue :
To live, a spectacle of woe and dread,
No peace by day, no rest upon thy bed,
To roam, deserted as the stricken roe,
On the rough flint to lay thy houseless head,
And every balm of youth and hope forego,
Each sight a sight of pain, each sound a sound of woe.

XLI.

How fearful 'tis to walk the haunted plain
When twilight glooms, or dews of midnight fall,
When wild-fire lures to death the fated swain,
When corpse-lights glimmer in the witches' hall,
And revels not of earth the moon appal :
When paws th' infernal charger in the glen,
And fairies to the passing meteors call,
Or strange communion hold in wizard den
With many a giant shade that once were kings of men.

XLII.

See from the mountain or the cloud rush down
The formidable Hunter of the deep,
His name, his race, his errand all unknown.
Wind, flood, and thunder with less fury sweep
Than his pale courser plunges o'er the steep ;
Prostrates the forest, shakes the wilds around,
Fire-snorting takes, with mane erect, the leap ;
Flies o'er the lake at one impetuous bound,
Then vanishes in air, or sinks into the ground.

XLIII.

Intrepid watchers have beheld the sight
(Some say) near Ivrelagh's Franciscan pile,
Or where St. Finian reared the abbeyed height
Of sanctuary upon the sacred isle,
Ere rapine and Maolduin dared defile
The votive ground, and mad with thirst of gold
Profane the cemetery's last asyle.
Even yet, such chronicle, by beldam told,
Hath power to thrill with dread the boldest of the bold.

XLIV.

But now what acclamations from our trance
Awake us to the business of the day :
For, as the rosy-fingered hours advance,
Impatient appetite is heard to say,
“ A time for all things—why the feast delay ?”
In wide promiscuous navy we forsake,
Glena, thy solemn amplitude of bay,
And o’er the roughening and cloud-darkened lake
Right eagerly our course to rest and dinner take.

XLV.

In universal boat-race we return
To Inisfallen’s steep but verdant side :
The rowers toil, they strain, they pant, they burn.
“ Well pulled, my sons,” th’ exulting cockswain
cried ;
“ Hurra !” the sturdy mariners replied.
“ Drag her along,” vociferates he ; and all
With a thrice-double zeal their vigour tried.
Severe the toil : but sweet in Boatman’s-Hall
To change the tug of oars for ease and festival.

XLVI.

Hail ! Inisfallen, hail ! enchanted ground,
In all th' excess of loveliness arrayed,
Amid the majesty of nature round ;
Here open lawn, there close-retiring shade,
Inextricable maze of copse and glade,
The tufted eminence, the flowery dell,
The music by the murmuring waters made,
The rock, the grotto—vain attempt to tell
The numberless delights that in this Eden dwell.

XLVII.

But not this hour could contemplation find
Fit leisure here to meditate and pray ;
So thick the beach, the mead, the grove, are lined
With groups that saunter in confusion gay
Awhile of mutual quizzing and display,
Then on the grass or trunk of tree recline,
Soothed by the wind and water's roundelay,
And carve the baked meats, and pour out the wine
In honour of the day, but more of beauty's shrine.

XLVIII.

See lady bright with pearly crescent mooned,
Gipsy and clown with not a hat to show,
Slim youths, bewhiskered or bepantalooned,
And brawny boatmen on the beach below.
Age, manhood, and the vermeil-tinctured glow
Of youth, all bandying shout and repartee,
Not one mute tongue, not one o'erclouded brow ;
While pleased the stranger and the tourist see
The isle abandoned all to frolic and to glee.

XLIX.

Some watch the rippling wave upon the shore,
Some walk the wildly-varied circuit round,
And each traditionary nook explore,
And the dim cave that hath memorial found,
For honour and confiding love renowned.
Now into figure glide the festive throng,
And dance begin : say not they touch the ground ;
For beauty floats in air, and skims along,
Charming and charmed, on wings of melody and song.

L.

Time was, the pomp conventual here arose
Of transept, clerestory, nave and quire,
That from the world gave refuge and repose
To youthful acolyte, and hoary sire,
The lordly abbot and cord-girded friar,
Who once confession heard, awarded doom,
Or of devotion fanned the living fire.
They were ; but are not : in sepulchral gloom
They sleep, and memory's self lies buried in their tomb.

LI.

Here then one moment let me rescue still
From merriment that leaves no trace behind ;
And 'mid the fractured relics rove at will
Of cell and cloister ; wisdom there to find,
Where weeds and ivy rustle to the wind,
And not a pinnacle remains to fall
Of niche or tomb that saint or hero shrined.
Arch, gateway, tower and porch are mouldered all,
Briars, nettles, mole-hills hide the consecrated wall,

LII.

Where now of noon, of vespers, or of prime,
No chant is heard, no ceremonial seen,
No preacher but the grave. Relentless time,
Heavy thy tread, thy hand hath heavy been,
That scarce a bare foundation prints the green.
O death, all-eloquent (though slow is man
To hear thee), give us warning not to lean
On the bruised reed of earth, but while we can,
With faith and virtue fill of life the narrow span.

LIII.

Wise, for a moment, was the Persian king,
Once weeping in ambition's mad career ;
For awful truth can to the proudest bring
At times conviction sudden and severe.
Even now her monitory voice is here,
While to the distant sound of mirth and play
I listen with a melancholy ear.
A little while, and all the young and gay
Shall sleep with the departed, mute and cold as they.

LIV.

Wealth, power, ambition, every hope and joy,
Are but a dream, a toy of painted air,
The full-blown bubble of a playful boy :
And if thou canst, philosophy, declare
What more than this thy schemes and systems are.
But yet in Gilead may be found a stem
That drops a balm for ever rich and rare ;
There is a priceless pearl, there is a gem
That through eternity outshines the diadem.

LV.

Who would repine with such reward in view,
Or mourn the tenure frail of all below ?
Or vent the rueful plaint, how brief, how few,
How empty, all the pleasures we can know ?
Press onward, and look upward : let the glow
Of faith and hope be quickened into flame,
And charity be liberal to bestow.
Meantime, resume the world ; where shouts proclaim
On embarkation bent, peer, knight, esquire and dame.

LVI.

From Inisfallen to the tower of Ross
(Where Ludlow and Muskerry fought of yore)
The waning twilight warns and guides across
Our slow-returning squadrons to the shore,
While dirge-like gales the close of day deplore.
Soft glides the boat along: the waters foam
And sparkle to the dashing of the oar.
We land, we look a long farewell, and roam
With oft-reverted eye in pensive musing home.

LVII.

Like the fond melancholy when we view
The floweret fade, or leaf in autumn fall,
Such the regret of parting and adieu,
Though hope, though pleasure, or though duty call.
The lot of time and chance is drawn by all,
And virtue's hope in heaven hath ever been ;
Yet scarce even virtue from this earthly ball
Can every thought, and all affection wean,
Till age and death instil the final drop serene.

LVIII.

In the last voyage, to the last abode,
When pass the pure in heart from care and pain,
From sorrow and from sin, life's weary load,
To mingle hallelujahs with the strain
Of seer and patriarch in th' empyreal fane,
Even then they pause, and ere they mount on high,
One look to the forsaken body deign;
While disinthrall'd from every earthly tie,
Impassive to decay and never more to die,

LIX.

New life commencing, they have thrown aside
The garment of mortality and woe :
And everlasting portals open wide
To welcome and imparadise them. Lo !
Ascending and ascending up they go,
And leave the dwindling universe behind.
Man's universal debt in one brief throe
Was cancell'd ; and their spirits are enshrin'd
In beatific vision of th' Eternal Mind.

LX.

Dazzled and overpowered, with eye and ear
Yet uninitiate, they at first behold
Obscurely, and with doubtful organ hear
Their title in the Book of Life enroll'd ;
Till gradually the realms of bliss unfold,
And the third heaven be vocal to the train
Of seraphim, that palm and crown of gold
Presenting, hail them to th' ethereal plain,
In joy unutterable world without end to reign.

LXI.

What radiance flashes on their opening eye !
What strains of transport fill their opening ear !
See the Celestial City blaze on high,
And ringing through the universal sphere
The shout of archangelic voices hear.
Thousands of thousands, number without bound,
Wake the triumphant song of heaven's own year,
And in mysterious harmony around
Ten thousand times ten thousand angel harps resound.

LXII.

Before them in augmenting glory's beam
Th' unfathomable azure melts away ;
While onward to the sanctuary supreme
Careering through th' infinitude of day,
They pour their souls into th' hierarchal lay
That circles evermore the mountain bright
Where sits whom saint nor angel can survey,
Too high, too glorious for created sight,
Throned unapproachable in mystery of light.

CAMBUSCAN.

CAMBUSCAN.

FROM CHAUCER.

IN Sarra (so tradition tells) of yore
Cambuscan the Tartarian sceptre bore,
And oft with battle and the bolts of war
Like hurricane assailed the Russian Tsar,
Till, spent with slaughter, on each others' breast
The long-contending empires sunk to rest.
From Palestine to China none was found
Like him for kingly attributes renowned :
Though Pagan born, he loved each pious rite,
And walked the best he could by reason's light :

(The best he could ; for howsoe'er we boast,
Reason is but a glimmering lamp at most).
Wealthy he was, and wise, benign and just,
Firm to his word, and faithful to his trust ;
Of hardihood and warlike skill approved,
And courage as the centre unremoved ;
In arts, and arms, and manly beauty's prime,
The wonder of his people and his time ;
While well-deserved prosperity his throne
In fame upheld superior and alone.

Two sons he had by Elfeta his wife :
His elder born and heir hight Algarsife ;
And Camballo the younger prince's name ;
Each worthy of the sire from whom they came.

His youngest offspring was a daughter fair,
Called Canace ; whose stature, shape, and air,
And beauty to describe, my skill were vain ;
Nor dare I enterprise so high a strain.
To celebrate her praises would require
A tongue of harmony and muse of fire ;
And such her loveliness as rightly sung
Would renovate the old, and madden all the young.

Cambuscan now had twenty winters worn
The diadem, when on the festive morn
Of his nativity, from year to year
With pageants solemnized and royal cheer,
The heralds in procession took their way
Through Sarra to proclaim the welcome day.

Northward from Equinoctial Line the sun
Began through Aries his career to run,
And while he paced that hot and choleric sign,
The temperature so lusty and benign,
The tender verdure, and the solar fire,
Awaked on every spray the feathered quire
To chant the melodies of young desire,
That to the balmy gales their transport told,
Delivered from the sword of winter's cold.

Cambuscan in his palace sat full high,
Enrobed and crowned in royal majesty,
And his imperial feast all pomp excelled
Within the habitable globe beheld.
Of which should I describe the full array,
The tale would occupy a summer's day.

With sewers and seneschals to crowd my rhyme,
And swans, and hernshaws, were but waste of time :
Strange flesh (if legendary bards say true)
Is dainty there, which here we die to view.
The marshals and the service of the hall,
No mortal numbers can recount them all :
And (not in efforts vain my strength to waste)
I pass them by, and to my purpose haste.

The third course done, in his imperial state
The monarch 'midst his lords and ladies sat,
While all the pillars and the roof rebound
With thundering gongs, and the loud trumpets' sound,
A martial minstrelsy and merry din ;
When at the portal suddenly came in
A youthful warrior on a steed of brass,
And in his hand a mirror broad of glass,
Upon his thumb a golden ring he wore,
And swinging by his side a naked falchion bore ;
And up he rideth to the high state board,
While no man at the banquet spake a word
For wonder of this knight ; whom to behold
Full busily they gaze, both young and old.

His beaver up, disclosed a visage fair,
Gorgeous his arms, majestic was his air,
While king and queen, and dames, and courtiers all
Salutes he by their order in the hall,
With reverence and observance so complete
As well in aspect as in utterance meet,
That Gawain, if returned from fairy ground,
With all his ancient courtesy renowned,
Could neither alter nor amend a word :
And after this, before the high state board,
With learned eloquence and grave regard,
And manly voice his message he declared,
And gesture such as grace and reason teach,
When speech with action, action suits with speech.
I cannot parle like that redoubted knight,
My genius is rebuked nor dares so high a flight ;
But this in common phrase was his intent,
If I remember right my argument.

The king whom Araby and Ind obey,
My lord and liege, on this illustrious day
Saluteth you, as best he can and may,
And sendeth you, in honour of your feast,
By me who thus attend on your behest,

This steed of brass, that easily can run
Without delay or harm, 'twixt sun and sun,
(That is to say, in four and twenty hours)
Where'er you please, in sunshine or in showers,
Serene and swift his rider to convey
Whither your heart's desire directs the way ;
Or would you dart into the loftier air
With full security through foul or fair,
Where the sun-climbing eagle loves to soar,
The faithful voyager will ever more
The very course prescribed unerring keep,
Though on his back you take repose and sleep ;
And ever up and down, and to and fro,
Obsequious to your pleasure will he go.
Full many a constellation, many a sign,
Of potent influence and aspect benign,
The mighty master waited, ere he won
His moment, and this prodigy was done.

By looking on this mirror may be known
Whate'er adversity betides your crown ;
In shadow it reveals your friend or foe,
Your empire's welfare or your empire's woe :

And, more than this ; whenever lady bright
Hath deigned a tender thought of prince or knight,
If he prove false, it sets in open view
His fraud, his treason, and his mistress new.

Wear in your purse this ring, or on your hand,
And in a moment shall you understand
The languages of all the fowls that fly,
And how to make them suitable reply ;
And every med'cinable herb shall know
That heal the deadliest wounds, and where they grow.

Though adamantine arms oppose your might,
This trusty sword through plate and mail will smite ;
And for its lightest touch all aid is vain,
No styptics staunch the blood, no balms allay the pain,
Till with the flat you stroke the sufferer's wound ;
Then shall it close, and he again be sound :
Full well its use will vouch what I have told,
Nor ever fail, while you retain your hold.

This falchion hath Arabia's monarch sent,
The pledge to Tartary of good intent ;

While with the virtuous ring and mirror rare
Your daughter Canace he greeteth fair.

His message done, behold the youthful knight
Ride out of hall, and from his courser light.
His courser, flashing radiance like the sun,
Stands in the court (his airy travel done) :
The knight, unarm'd in an apartment fair,
Is summoned thence the royal feast to share.
The mirror and the sword of trenchant blade,
With pomp and long procession are conveyed,
And reverence as beseems their magic power,
And safely lodged in the high treasury tower ;
And the mysterious ring is borne in state
To Canace, at table where she sat.
But, sooth to say, the brazen courser stands
As bolted to the earth by unseen hands,
And engine, pulley, windlace, vainly boast
To wrench the stubborn wonder from his post.
For why ? they understand not yet the skill :
And in the court perforce they leave him still,
Until the knight the talisman unfold
To stir him, as hereafter shall be told.

Great is the multitude, that to and fro
About this steed in speculation go :
For in dimensions large, high, broad, and long,
And well proportioned to be swift and strong,
Majestical it stood, and quick of eye,
And the renowned Frontino might outvie,
Apulian breed, or horse of Lombardy.
From head to tail, in each proportion kenned,
Nor art nor nature could his shape transcend.

But much they wondered how it came to pass
That motion should reside in horse of brass.
To most it seemed by fairy fingers wrought,
Yet every gazer had his several thought :
So many men, so many notions rise,
And each one in his own conceit is wise.
They murmured like a swarm of bees, and long
Recited acts of legendary song,
And Hippogrif, and Pegasus, and Troy,
Which ambushed Greeks in wooden horse annoy.

Mine heart (quoth one) is ever held in dread
By cares from subtle circumspection bred.

No doubt embattled legions are within,
Conspiring our metropolis to win.
Preposterous thought ! (another whispered low)
'Tis some mechanic toy or juggler's show,
Or fashioned underneath in caves of hell,
Domdaniel called, where fiends and wizards dwell.
So deem the vulgar of each engine wrought
With sapience that eludes their prying thought ;
And what their ignorance cannot comprehend,
Their spite interprets to the baser end.

Then spake they of the mirror's magic power,
That was borne up into the master tower :
If such phantasmas on its face were seen,
'Twas surely not of earth, nor wrought by hands
terrene.

Yet some believed by composition nice
Of angles, and of optical device,
It might be well and naturally done,
And that in Rome was such another one.
Of art, and algebra, and learned men,
And Aristotle, much they reasoned then ;

And how Alhazen and Vitelli wrote
Of specula, perspectives, and what not ?
As they who study their dark volumes wot.

Then talk they of the falchion that could drive
Through plate and mail, and stoutest metal rive,
Of Telephus, Achilles, and the steel
That could in turn inflict a wound, and heal :
And how to temper sword and spear they show ;
Craft which I know not, nor desire to know.

But for the ring of Canace, they thought
Never such miracle to light was brought ;
Though some had heard of mickle wonder done
By Moses and the wise king Solomon.

Nathless, said some, it was a cunning pass
From flint and steel and ashes to make glass ;
Yet glass is nothing like flint, ashes, sand ;
But hard things easy are to such as understand.

In doubt and queries thus their brains they tire.
So men the source and mystery require
Of wind, and heaven's thought-executing fire,

And gossamer, and mist, and ocean's tide,
And all things, till their causes be descried.

Long time they argue, nor desist from brawl
Till king and courtiers leave the festive hall.

The sun had sunk from his meridian tower,
The Lion with his Aldrian ruled the hour,
When from his board the Tartar monarch rose :
The jocund minstrelsy before him goes,
Till in the presence-hall he sits on high,
And round him instruments and voices vie
In lofty lay, and heaven of melody.

The progeny of Venus now advance
With measure smooth and airy grace to dance :
For through the constellations rides their queen
And looks upon them with an eye serene.

The noble king is seated on his throne ;
The champion peregrine hath homage done,
And to the music's sound in lightsome glee
Adown the dance is gone with Canace.

The revels that ensue are hard to show :
Love and love's service should the poet know,
And as the birds be blithe, and fresh as May,
Ere he describe a festival so gay.

Who can recite each brisk fantastic dance,
Each nymph-like shape, and lovely countenance,
Glances and amorous wiles and quaint disguise,
Elusive of the jealous lover's eyes ?
No man but Lancelot ; and he is dead :
So let them revel, and no more be said.
Till change of luxury to the banquet call,
I leave them in their stately carnival.

Amid their merriment the steward's care
Sends in the blood-red wine and spicery rare.
The servitors take post in every room,
The beverage and cates anon are come ;
They eat and drink, and then in solemn show
(As bids religion) to the temple go :
There vows, and service, and oblation pay,
Then palace-ward return, and sup by day.

What need I Homer's savoury Muse unsphere
To sing their cookery and delicious cheer ?
Untold we guess that in a kingly feast
Is plenty, to the greatest and the least ;
And pageantry, as monarchs may beseem,
And dainties more than hungry poets dream.

From supper with his peers Cambuscan bold
Goes forth, the brazen courser to behold.
But never was such wondering sure as then,
Save when the horse of Sinon ambushed men,
And in amazement stood the Trojans all
While climbed the fatal engine o'er their wall.
At length the king. " Inform me, gentle knight,
The virtue of this charger and the might,
And how to give him life, and bid him fly
Through unknown deserts, or th' ethereal sky."

"Sire," said the knight (and lightly touched the rein,
And instantly the courser pranced amain),
" Touch but a spring (for such the hidden spell),
Which to your ear in secret I will tell ;
And name to him the pilgrimage designed :
Aloft he starts, and distances the wind.

“ Your journey ended, issue fresh command,
And to another spring apply your hand,
And down he will descend and do your will,
And, where you list, inflexible stand still :
Nor all the world, though all the world should strive,
Can either lure him from his post or drive.
Or would you have him vanish hence anon,
Touch but another spring and he is gone
Into unworldly regions from your sight,
And will return again by day or night,
When with such cabalistic words you call
As I shall teach, his presence to your hall.”

When thus Cambuscan from the stranger knight
Had learned the manner and the form aright,
Triumphant to the palace he returns,
And with astonishment and rapture burns.
The bridle to the treasury tower with care
Is borne, and lodged among his jewels rare :
The horse is vanished from the haunts of man ;
But whither gone, or how, declare who can :
Let speculators, if they list explore ;
For gone he is, and I reveal no more,

But leave the Tartar nobles with their king
In revelry, till day began to spring.

Slumber, digestion's nurse, came then apace,
And kissed with gaping mouth each ruby face :
The drowsy charm convinced them in a trice
All day and half the night might well suffice
To keep their rouse ; and warned them for their good
That sleep asserts domain o'er flesh and blood.
Yawning they give him thanks, and for the best
His doctrine hold, and reel away to rest.

What night-mare dreams ensued, concerns not me,
Most part were staggering-ripe with jollity ;
And heavy floundered down, and rose not soon,
Snoring in lubbard lethargy till noon.

Cambuscan's self had long held wassail gay,
Yet yielded not to wine's ignoble sway :
Nor Algarsife nor Camballo resigned
To brute intemperance the manly mind ;
But when the herald-star of morning rose,
Betook them cool and lightsome to repose.

Fair Canace had (with her father's leave)
From banquet drawn to rest soon after eve,
Shunning the nightly surfeit, morning pains,
Of fevered pulse and fume-bewildered brains.
She slept; but such her fulness of content,
That even in sleep her colour came and went.
The ring, the glass, were present to her thought,
And peradventure elfin fancy brought
The blooming knight of Araby to view,
Amorous, and by the mirror witnessed true.
From aëry-light first slumber she awoke,
And to her prime attendant matron spoke,
And said it was her pleasure to arise.

The wrinkled crone, who deemed herself more wise
(As beldames use) than all the world beside,
With undesired remonstrance thus replied.
“Madam, the morn is young, the world at rest;
A little slumber more were surely best.”

“Not so,” quoth Canace: “my sleep is fled;
The breezy morn is balm, the sky is red,
And health and pleasure bid me walk or run
Where yonder forest brightens in the sun.”

The much-reluctant dame goes forth to vent
In simulated zeal her discontent.
From room to room explores the lofty halls,
And "what? no watch, no duty?" loudly calls.
"Arise, for shame, your princess takes the air."
They hear, and to her presence-room repair.
Fresh, smiling, bright, and ruddy as the sun
When orient through the vernal sky to run,
See Canace advance in light array
For coolness fit, or speed, or mirthful play,
And with her virgin bevy o'er the lawn
And woodlands bound, exulting in the dawn.

The sun with ample orb of crimson sheen
Scattered the mist and gemmed the dewy green;
The season mild, the firmamental blue,
The park, rock, stream, the mountain's distant view,
All art, all nature, prodigal inspired
Joy more than heart had imaged or desired.
But chief delight was in the thrilling song
From glade and thicket of the plummy throng:
For well the gifted princess could descry
Their speech and argument of melody.

Not long did Canace transported rove,
Hearkening th' harmonious converse of the grove,
When from a plantain, blasted, dry, and bare,
A falcon shrieked in accents of despair,
So long, so shrill, that the disastrous sound .
Awaked each echo of the forest round,
And wounded so with beak and wings her side,
That all the ground beneath with blood was dyed.
Her plaint so rueful, and so loud her moan,
That savage beast, or hardest heart of stone,
Hyæna, tyger, pard, or lion bold,
Had wept (if weep they could) her sorrow to behold.

For never bard or painter could describe
A lovelier model of the falcon tribe.
Short legs, large feet, broad shoulders, and thighs long;
Round head, long neck, beak thick and short and
strong ;
Her feet were yellow, and her pounces black,
Sable her head, and spotted was her back :
In colour, shape, and spirit passing rare,
Perfection's self, she baffled all compare.

But Canace, dissolved in pity, hies
Up to the tree, and each enticement tries
To lure (if hope of remedy might be)
The well-nigh fainting mourner from the tree ;
And holds her lap abroad, or ere she call,
To catch her, and arrest the giddy fall ;
And thus in language of the falcon kind
Gives utterance to her sympathizing mind.

“ Fair bird, if lawful to disclose thy pain,
The cause and origin of woe explain :
For never yet such tempest of distress
I saw, so seeming desperate of redress ;
And needs that anguish beyond thought must be,
Whose very spectacle is death to see.
For mercy’s sake, whatever pangs annoy,
Desist, nor thus that tender frame destroy ;
And kill me not with sorrow for thy sake,
But listen, and descend, and comfort take :
For, as I am the daughter of a king,
Relief no less than soothing will I bring,
If labour, skill, or any power of mine
May alter and assuage the fates malign ;
Thrice happy, if composing every smart

Of wound or bruise, I could as soon impart
The balm of consolation to thine heart."

This heard, the falcon screaming from the tree,
Fell senseless in the lap of Canace :
And lying long as one entranced or dead,
At length revived, and slowly raised her head ;
And with full many a tear and many a sigh
Unfolded thus her wayward destiny.

" Compassion evermore and virtue find
Their native dwelling in the noble mind.
Those tears, my gentle Canace, I know
From sweet and undissembling pity flow :
And therefore, though the sorrows I endure
Be past the reach of solace or of cure,
Yet while thy soft suggestions I attend,
Methinks a kindred spirit calls me friend ;
And howsoe'er uncouth, nor worth thine ear,
Yet freely flows my tale from heart sincere.

" Though with my feathered sisters of the sky
Through cloud and tempest now condemned to fly,

Though chambered in the rock of marble gray,
And instinct-driven to rend my quivering prey,
Yet pity once I knew, nor would have harmed
The smallest living thing in air or earth that swarmed ;
For human birth was mine, and human frame,
Till in perfidious love destruction came.

“ By misery driven from his parental home
In life's eventful pilgrimage to roam,
My sire had heard the Russian ice-wind blow,
And felt the summers of Serendib glow ;
Had hailed the palaces of orient morn,
And seen departing suns the western main adorn.
The manners and the laws of every clime
He marked, and chronicles of hoary time,
And in the search of wisdom hoped to find
Repose and medicine for his wounded mind ;
Till, pilgrimage and toil and danger past,
In Persia's meads he found repose at last ;
There guarded, reared and blest my tender age
With fond endearment and monition sage,
And strove my ripening intellect to store
With truth and fortitude, and virtue's lore.

Of regions far remote, and days of old,
And wonders in the height and depth he told,
Of nature's fabric and all-perfect scheme,
And boundless goodness of the Cause supreme.

“But when my fifteenth year began to shed
Its inauspicious influence o'er my head,
A neighbouring youth, Faradatha his name,
Enkindled in my breast affection's flame ;
Equal our age, alike our tempers seemed,
And each on each a mutual passion beamed.
His strength and courage, countenance and mind,
Whate'er ennobles or adorns mankind,
Were all, save virtue, noble and complete ;
And virtue's self he knew to counterfeit
In goodliest semblance, though repress within
Corruption lurked, and woe-engendering sin.
He sighed, he kneeled, remorseless to deceive,
Vowed spotless truth, and won me to believe.
Next heaven and my dear father, I relied
On him, my future spouse, companion, guide ;
His image was in every thought and care,
The morning orison and evening prayer.
And oft, by sadly-pleasing fear distressed,
Anxious I questioned my self-doubting breast,

What recompence could answer or repay
His faithful fondness and protecting sway.
Vain dream, vain happiness, reverse how fell,
How doubly keen from one beloved so well.

“Twelve moons, twelve blissful moons, the dear
deceit—

(Ah! why the vanished happiness repeat?)
Twelve fleeting moons so well the traitor feigned,
A free confession with my heart he gained :
Till in vain-glorious confidence secure
That love would all forgive and all endure,
Darkly and by degrees he did unroll
The complicated baseness of his soul ;
And languishing complained of love too coy,
And talked of stolen hours enhancing joy :
Now on my hand with eager glances hung,
Now to the melting lute insidious sung
Of honour needing not the legal chain,
And pity justly due to amorous pain,
What folly were to waste the precious time,
How wise to crown with bliss our beauty's prime.

“ Amazed, and doubtful if I heard aright,
My bosom throbbed with anger and affright ;
Yet hood-wink’d long and wavering was my fear,
Slow to suspect, and loth to seem austere :
My partial wishes still with reason strove,
And indignation more than half was love.
He, prompt with blandishment and specious wile
To say, unsay, and thousand ways beguile,
Long time with indefatigable art
Essayed each weaker entrance to my heart :
But when his countless artifices vain
Served only to confirm my just disdain,
And steel insulted tenderness to abjure
With sad and solemn vows his love impure,
He groaned, he trembled, gazed with frantic air,
And wept and smote his breast and tore his hair,
Then fled, and everlasting absence swore ;
And false Faradatha was seen no more.

“ But as he went sky loured, and nature frowned
Earth groaned, and winds re-murmured doleful sound,
The woodlands reeled, by hurricanes betost,
The day was sicklied o’er, the sun was lost,

Black clouds of thunder roared, and sudden glare
Of lightning flashed athwart the troubled air,
And sailing on the gloom a grisly form
Was seen to guide with outstretched hand the storm.
His aspect hideous, his dimensions vast,
His eyeballs fire, his voice the northern blast ;
Above my head he waved a gleaming brand,
And issued thus his merciless command.

“ ‘ Fond Rezia ! shall Faradatha descend
A frustrate suppliant at thy feet to bend ?
Thy groveling baseness shall the marriage rite
With his monarchal destinies unite ?
Him, by his pride and fierce ambition known,
Long since the rebel Genii hailed their own ;
And gave him privilege of magic skill
To change his blooming loveliness at will
For giant-sinewed strength, and heart of stone,
And iron flesh, and adamant bone.
Thus nerved, invincible he flies to war,
And mocks the steed, the falchion, and the car ;
Victory where'er he turns salutes him lord,
And empires rise or perish at his word ;

Till satiate with renown and kingly power
He seek repose in Savendrooga's bower,
Where lurks (O why am I constrained to tell ?)
The secret of his stars, the master spell,
On which (how dense, futurity, thy gloom,
How dark thy menace !) hangs our champion's doom.
He loves thee, Rezia, but his fates ordain
That never shall he wear the nuptial chain ;
For they who with our freeborn host combine
Must laugh to scorn laws human and divine.
Consent, and yield to his protecting arms
In unrestrained love thy willing charms ;
Else—but I see expostulation vain
With that coy virtue and obdured disdain.
Go then—and exiled by a vengeful change
From peace and hope, the wilds of æther range ;
Till with the tongue of birds thou canst disclose
To human ear the story of thy woes,
Till falls Faradatha, by mortal wight
Encountered, slain, on Savendrooga's height ;
And one of woman born shall hand to hand
Domdaniel's legioned soceries withstand.'

“ He threatened ; and ere yet his words had end,
I felt convulsion strange my bosom rend.
Through vein and artery ran the wicked spell,
Filled me with cruelty and hunger fell,
Embruted all my shape, and upward drove
Beneath heaven’s chilling canopy to rove,
And outeast of mankind effuse my moan
To the rude wind and the deaf mountain stone.
Nine moons have marked the dismal lapse of time
Since first I winged the bleak ethereal clime,
Yet helpless still I wander, and bewail
My childless sire and happy native dale :
Nor guardian ministers their aid impart,
Nor death vouchsafes to heal the broken heart.”

The falcon ceased, and all the virgin train
With tears of pity answered her again.
But the kind princess, tutored by her ring,
Sought every balm, and anodyne of spring,
Till having herbs of sovereign virtue found
To staunch and mollify each rankling wound,
Back to the palace eagerly she bore
The bleeding bird and salutary store :

Then bade an ample aviary prepare,
And nursed the sufferer with a sister's care,
And ceaseless toiled (compassion gave her skill)
To soften and beguile the sense of ill.
Fair Canace ! thy name and praise shall live :
Blest they who pity win, thrice-double blest who give.

And now my spirit (or I much misdeem)
Dilates and soars with my majestic theme ;
And henceforth statelier process will I hold
To sing adventure, tourney, battle bold,
And wonders such as never yet were told.

ELIAS HYDROCHOUS.

A Sacred Drama.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ELIAS.

AHAB, *King of Israel.*

ABDIAS, *Governor of the household.*

CHORUS, *of faithful Israelites.*

PRIESTS OF BAAL.

PEOPLE.

MESSENGER, *Servant of Elias.*

SCENE.—*At the foot of Mount Carmel, near the brook
Kishon.*

ELIAS HYDROCHOUS.

AHAB.

How slow is time, how wearisome the way,
When hope deferred lies heavy at the heart.
But see our journey's end ; the tufted brake
Of juniper, and yonder lofty rock
That overshadowing throws his pendulous bulk
O'er Kishon's nigh-exhausted stream. Is this
Th' appointed station, Abdias ? art thou sure,
And sure that he will come ? Again repeat
The tidings : for my soul unsatisfied
Craves still assurance more.

ABDIAS.

My lord and king,

At thy command I traversed hill and dale
Of Israel's realm, if haply from the blast
And three years' drought a pittance had escaped
Of forage that might save the royal steeds
Of pageantry and war : but long the search,
And frustrate all ; day after day the sun
Cloudless arose, and fired the sky, and parched
The gaping earth ; each watercourse was dry,
Each breeze the breath of furnace ; and the soil
Loose as the sandy wilderness, upflew
In clouds before the wind. O'erspent, and full
Of rumination sad, at length I came
Where now we tread : when 'thwart the twilight
dusk

Of day-dawn, in corporeal form revealed,
The prophet sought so oft, from realm to realm
With fruitless search, so long on earth unseen,
Slowly approached me, nor could I mistake
That majesty of countenance and form
Surpassing human : and the very voice
And utterance of Elias in mine ears

Resounded, while with brief and solemn speech
He thus began. “ Haste, Abdias, to thy king,
And certify whom thou hast seen, and add,
In presence visible Elias comes,
To give him meeting here.” With prostrate awe
I fell, and thus returned. “ Command not so,
Nor bid me with such dangerous embassy
Possess the royal ear. When I am gone,
The spirit shall sequester thee far hence,
I know not whither ; and my sovereign’s ire,
When coming at my call he finds thee not,
Shall doom me to the death.” The prophet heard,
And thus replied. “ As liveth He, the Lord
Of Hosts, by whom, and before whom I stand,
Assuredly to Ahab, here, this day
Will I appear.” Emboldened thus, I rose,
And came (not uninformed of thine approach)
To utter his behest : for on the way
Already rumour to mine ears had borne
Thy pilgrimage to Carmel, with the priests
Of Baalim, and mighty concourse called
From every tribe, to celebrate the rite
Sidonian, and from heathen gods implore
Refreshing rain.

AHAB.

It looks like truth: and yet
I scarce believe for joy. He is the last
Of those rebellious, who defiance hurled
To Astaroth, and mocked my radiant queen
Even at her altars: therefore have they fallen
Beneath the sword; and he, the chief, the worst,
The sole survivor, shall at length be mine.

ABDIAS.

Yet think: he is the prophet of the Lord,
Of Him whose stern denunciation binds
The clouds in iron, shuts the treasure-house
Of rain and dew, and three long years hath sent
A famine o'er the land: and wilt thou more
Incense the dread Chastiser?

AHAB.

Am I son
Of Omri, before whom the knee was bowed
In Gabathon, and am I Israel's king?

And am I to be baffled thus, and braved
And bearded by a frantic slave? How oft
In grove or temple, festival or fast,
Hath he rebuked me like a bondman, taxed
My worship with idolatry, laid curse
On my possessions, poisoned my repose
With threats of judgment.

ABDIAS.

His indeed the tongue,
But whose the bidding? the mysterious trance
Was on him, and he heard the voice divine,
And visions of Jehovah sanctified
His fiery lips, and sent him to reprove
Israel's apostasy.

AHAB.

Sent or unsent,
This day he dies: the congregated prime
Of all my people, all that to the sun,
The moon and stars burn incense, shall behold
His blood (a welcome expiation) flow,

Peace-offering to the violated fame
Of all my gods.

ABDIAS.

But where the shrine is reared
For that dire sacrifice, chained thunderbolts
In fury shall descend, or earth beneath
Open to her foundations, and entomb
The murderous pomp. Posterity shall shrink
From the detested region, whose convulsed
And blackened solitudes shall utter sound
Of woe in sinful ears, and chronicle
The wrath supreme.

AHAB.

Peace ; and speak never more,
Rather than so : the world and all its wealth
Would I resign, so I had nothing heard
Of all that was divulged on Sinai's mount
In fire and thunder. What is fame to me,
Or power, or empire, but an empty dream,

The mockery of a bliss I may not taste,
If saws and ordinances are to curb
My royalties ; if when desire and hope
And birth-right and dominion loudest call
To plunge amid the warm voluptuous flood
Of pomp and luxury ; if then the laws
And lore traditional of Amram's son
Rush upon memory, peopling all the brain
With prodigies and threatenings that might drive
The soul from seat of reason ? And if e'er
My better hopes have triumphed, and I know
And feel myself a king, and taste the sweets
Of monarchy, thy bodings come to rouse
The sleeping anguish ? How hast thou presumed,
Slave as thou art, to dally with the cares
Of my most inward soul, the bosom terror
Intolerable, that cankers my high fortune,
And palsies empire ? Better be a worm
Than Israel's king, and scorned as I am scorned
By this Elias. Long ago the sword
Of majesty had smitten to the dust
The upbraiding traitor, feared I not the wrath
Of Him who plunged Abiram and his peers
Alive into the abyss. That dreadful arm

Again may thunder, and at once exile me
From all the joys of sense, from all I prize
Or covet, to the pestilent profound
Of darkness and corruption. 'Tis a thought
May not be dwelt upon ; nor may I waste
The moments in vain musing, when so much
Is to be done—haste, Abdias, and convoke
The people ; bid them wait in readiness
Our great solemnity ; then hither call
To present divination and consult
The priests of Baal.

ABDIAS.

To consult with them
Is adding ill to ill. They smile and lure
With honeyed blandishment, but never knew
What truth or virtue mean. O rather turn
Where better guides approach : the chosen few
Of all thy counsellors, who never swerved
From the pure law of Horeb, never bowed
The knee to Remphan, nor profaned the faith
Of Abraham and of Moses, hither bend
Their reverend steps.

AHAB.

No more of this : begone,
And do as I commanded. Who are ye
That break my privacy ? The king demands
To know your pleasure ; wherefore ye intrude
Uncalled, importunate, unwelcome ; fraught
With admonition and predicted ill ?

CHORUS.

Gray hairs have privilege : and when the storms
Roar in their madness, welcome any hand
That can to safety steer. Thy kingdom mourns
Beneath the yoke and penalty of sin,
And sin must be repented of, ere grace
Or mercy can find way. Let public prayer
And penitence for public guilt atone,
That we may be forgiven, and once again
Behold and bless the life-imparting shower.

AHAB.

This then is all ; and ye have fondly dreamed
The monarchy of Israel slept supine

Regardless of his realm : but I had done
The deed, ere ye had ripened into thought.
The fast hath been proclaimed : already comes
From Jezreel hither all my state, the priests
Of Baal, and the prophets of the groves,
And crowds processional by herald's trump
From Dan to Bethel called.

CHORUS.

O never, never
Can lips or rites like these acceptance find,
Or safety : wherefore come they but to breathe
Their orisons before the senseless block
And molten image ? God of Abraham, hear ;
Have pity on thy people, and withdraw
The scourge of our impiety.

AHAB.

'Tis well
And wisely spoken ; go then, and invoke
His tenderness, who three successive years
Hath interdicted heaven, and changed to flame
Its liquid treasures : such his benison,

And such his mercy past, and such the pledge
Of mercy yet to come.

CHORUS.

We render thanks
Even for the punishment of guilt, and bless
The fatherly corrections that drive back
The wanderer to his God. Not undeserved
Nor unforeseen the sharp infliction fell :
Long time the stroke hung over us, long time
Elias warned.

AHAB.

Accursed be the name.
It haunts me in the palace, at the altar,
My solitude embitters, and appals
My slumber. The remembrance of that day
Is a full nest of scorpions, when my queen
Had newly slain the prophets, and sublime
At banquet sat we throned, amid the pomp
Of nobles, warriors, priests of Teraphim,
Exulting o'er the dead : magnificence
And joy unbounded reigned ; when suddenly

In at the portal, like a spectre came
The seer of Thoschab : haggard were his eyes
That measured us in anger ; vengeance loured
On his demoniac brow : the mirth was dumb,
The music ended, and our quivering knees
Against each other smote, as with a voice
That curdled up our blood, he thus began.
“ Blasphemers, murderers, revel in your deeds,
Heap sin on sin, but know that ye are marked
For judgment ; know that barrenness and drought
Are hasting to consume you. Till the tongue
That now denounces vengeance change its note
To gentle intercession, and implore
Remission of the doom, no rain shall bless
The day, nor ever dew by night descend.”
He ceased, and vanished. From that fatal hour
The clouds have been dried up, and earth beneath
Languishing withers.

CHORUS.

When the nations reel
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with the blood
Of innocence, then issue plague and sword,

Famine and fire ; and children's children rue
Their sacrilegious fathers.

AHAB.

Insolent !

Be mute when I command thee ; and no more
Assay before the footstool to abase me,
Of whom the patriarchs worshipped. I despair
Pardon from him whose stern ambassadors
To me speak never good. Time was, perchance,
When seasonable instruction might have trained
My spirit to the legal ordinance,
And taught me to confide in oracle,
By Urim given and Thummim : but that time
Long since is past : long since have I resigned
To pleasure, and irrevocably chosen
The gay devotion of Ethbaal's realm,
That beckons me to sprightlier ceremonies,
Each sense alluring, and each wish fulfilling.

CHORUS.

Refulgent sun, declare
The fountain of thy glory, and the Power

That gives thee to career in light and joy
From the pavilions of the morn
To where the crimson occident
O'erhangs th' immeasurable sea.
Mazaroath, ye that bind
In mystic orb of constellated fires
The seasons and their change,
And all ye stellar guardians of the night,
Ye lamps that burn along the road to heaven,
Resound your Maker's praise :
And ye, the thousand times ten thousand,
That ministrant around the thunderous throne
In adoration bow,
Proclaim, for ye were present, and beheld
How from the womb of chaos and of night
Innumerable worlds arose
Obedient to Jehovah's call :
And ye beheld when at his look of doom
'The doors and fountains of the deep
Were broken up, and desolation rode
Upon the boundless ocean that devoured
Earth and the generations of mankind.
Can deities of wood and stone
To th' unholy prayer and vow

Give audience or reply ?
The chiselled block derides
Its own besotted worshipper,
Who for the hewn similitude
Of monster, brute and fiend,
And loathly shapes and fantasies
Of superstition's brain,
Forsakes the Holy One of Israel,
Whose arm at Baal-zephon sepulchred
Proud Egypt in the deep,
And smiting Jordan's flood,
Dry-shod led his people through,
While from his presence in affright
The hills and mountains fled.
He dashed the walls of Jericho to dust,
And barbed with hail the clouds,
And bade their archery at Beth-horon quell
The puissance of confederate kings,
And held the sun suspense
On Gibeon, and the moon in Ajalon,
And swelled the horned might of Kishon's flood
To whelm the steeds and cars of Sisera.
Deluded sinners ! turn,
Renounce your idols, and repent

While mercy may be found,
Lest inextinguishable fire
Consume you, and your memory leave
Detestable to latest age,
Like the salt pillar in that blasted plain,
Where stood Gomorrah, still beheld
A monumental woe.

AHAB.

Provoke me not too far, lest I forget
Your utter worthlessness, how far beneath
The scope of my revenge ; beware the sword
Which indignation hath already half
Unsheathed to smite you. Ah ! why reels the frame
Of nature, what unwonted shadowing veils
The cheerful dawn ?

CHORUS.

I hear a rushing sound
Of whirlwind, and the mountains disappear,
In eddying smoke involved ; and 'mid the gloom
I see—or is it all illusion ? No ;

'Tis he : his very self. Hail, long withheld,
And sought with tears, our lost Elias ! hail,
Interpreter of heaven !

AHAB.

Stern destiny
Hath borne him in the chariot of the winds,
And clad him with invulnerable arms :
The supernatural visiting confounds
And vanquishes : I tremble, and my limbs
Sink under me.

ELIAS.

Rise, Ahab, king of Israel,
And look upon me : He who brought me hither
Is passed by, and leaves thee to converse
As man with man.

CHORUS.

Take courage, prince, and hold
The eventful colloquy : for on his brow
(Though mournful and austere) compassion dwells.

AHAB.

Stand back ; and meddle not with things too high
For thee ; but carry thy vain babble hence
To where 'tis needed. Be it mine to face
The sudden foe. And art thou found, O thou
That troublest Israel ?

ELIAS.

Say not I am he
That troubleth Israel : their own sins, and thine
And of thy father's house, when ye forsook
The Lord your God, and followed Baalim,
Drew down the devastation. Mine were words
Of prophecy and message more than prayer.
But whatsoe'er they were, I did but speak
By prompture of the Spirit : his the voice
That barred the ethereal citadels, and shut
The windows of the rain.

AHAB.

What pastime then
To thee and to thy God : the rivers dry,

The harvest parched, the vintages on fire,
The cry of orphans and the widow's groan :
'Thyself in vaporous tabernacle veiled,
To range unseen at pleasure, and peruse
Our miseries, and bemock our lengthened woe.

ELIAS.

Bear witness, earth and heaven, if ever prince
In clemency his servants so forbore,
If ever father so unwilling smote
His disobedient children, as the Lord
Hath smitten Israel. Forty years he gave
His guardian presence in the wilderness,
Poured down the food of angels on your host,
Sent often his empyreal messengers
On embassies of love, and warned you oft
By judge and seer ; yet Him have ye renounced
For idols and for fiends. O had ye fallen
Into the hands of man, and had the wrath
Of God been sudden as the choleric heat
Of sublunary princes, long ago
All Israel in the sepulchre had slept,
Silence and night their covering, and the worm

Their winding sheet : or had Jehovah dealt
Strictly with your desert, a thousand years
Of sickness, famine, pestilence, and war,
Your cities sacked, your mountain garrisons
Scaled like a vulture's nest, your fields despoiled,
Your young men slain, your elders captive led,
Your infants dashed on stones, or perishing
Abortive in the womb, had not atoned
The vast offence : for all our history
Is lust, oppression, devil-sacrifice,
Age after age, from the rebellious routs
In Marah and Rephidim, to that day
Of blasphemy, when thy remorseless queen,
Ethbaal's blood-delighting daughter, slew
The prophets of the Lord.

AHAB.

No : swallow down
That false and foul reproach again ; for well
Thou knowest, all perished not.

ELIAS.

Wherefore not all ?
Was that thy mercy ? Was it the relenting

Of Ahab and of Jezebel, that saved
A remnant from the sword ? Not one ye spared
Of all that could be found ; and had ye known
Their place of refuge, and the pious hand
That rescued them, the rest had perished too,
And with them their preserver : but his name
Is registered for a reward on high,
And known to God alone. Well have ye taught
Lessons of slaughter, and the people well
Have profited : like eagles from afar
They stoop upon the quarry, more athirst
For blood the more they gorge ; and day by day
From city drive to city, scarce in rocks
Secure, in forest, mountain, cave, or den,
The witnesses of Truth. How few are left
That still hold fast obedience, and adore
The Lord Most High !

AHAB.

Yet those elect, their God
Abandons to their fate : no manna falls
Around their dwelling, nor the luscious quail

Upon their habitation, as of old
Amid the wilderness : no water-brook
For them uprises, nor the rain and dew
In sign of favour plenteousness impart.

ELIAS.

Are quails and manna, water-brook and rain,
All, or the best of all he can bestow ?
There is a sustenance, there is a gift
That savours not of earth, nor harbours taint
Of earth's corruption, but can smooth the brow
Of penury and pain, and light up smiles
Upon the cheek of death : there is a hope
Outsoars mortality ; there is a faith
Lays hold on bliss celestial.

AHAB.

Specious hypocrite,
Easy for thee to fable and to vaunt
Of hope and faith, exempted as thou art
From suffering : thirst and hunger reach not thee,
For whom protecting Providence hath spread
A table in the desert : thou canst look

Serene on Israel's woe, while thine the smooth
And pleasant office, to prescribe content,
And dictate how salubrious are the stripes
That touch not thee.

ELIAS.

And is it nothing then
That I am torn from my paternal fields,
From family and home, in banishment
Houseless to wander? Nothing then to live
A thing forbidden, pining in the lair
Of savage beast, remote from man, cut off
From social intercourse? Or wouldst thou change
For dreariment like this thy regal pomp
And luxury, leave thy soft voluptuous couch
To pillow thee on rocks, thy sumptuous board
To diet with the ravens, or thy domes
With cedar lined, and painted with vermillion,
For savage solitudes and antres wild?
Earth and earth's comforts, what are they to me
Who scarce partake man's nature, nor may tread
The common paths of death? But not for this
I came, not idly to hold argument

With guilt that will not learn: but to display
In action, and proof palpable, the power
Of heaven's omnific Sire. Immediate call
The multitude that waits thee from each tribe
Of Israel, and to present issue bring
The strife of God with idols: let this day
Determine which the God that answer gives
By sign miraculous: and if not to me
Such answer be vouchsafed, then let me die.

AHAB.

Ha! is it so? and under the fair show
Of bold defiance lurks no fraudulent snare?
Is there no secret peril, is no charm
Inwoven with thy life? and if I take
The forfeiture, shall no blood-vestured plague,
No afterbirth of ill the deed avenge?

ELIAS.

Are then thy gods so feeble, that a spell
Can baffle them? Not so the Holy One
Omnipotent, before whose judgment-seat
And in whose hand once more I make appeal.

If miracle attest me not this day
Ambassador of God, be instant death
My lot ; nor Sidon's realm, nor Israel's tribes,
Nor thou nor thine shall ever rue the doom.

AHAB.

Moth and Beelphegor, rejoicing hear !
I did but wish ; and fortune hath fulfilled
My utmost heart's desire : and see the priests
Of Baalim, by Abdias led, advance
Already : Abdias, measure back thy steps,
And bid expectant Israel to this place
Assemble straight. Ye prophets of the groves,
Behold your enemy, so long pursued
Through many a realm, while issued not a voice
From all our oracles to guide the search,
Or whisper hope ; behold him hither brought
Before our face, and given to our revenge.

PRIEST.

Magnific day :
Fraught with conquest and with glory,
And tributary victims paid

To Hivite images and shrines.
Ye Cemarim, arouse
Your instruments of music, and exalt
Baal-berith's peerless power,
And the name unparagoned,
Belth-samaim, queen of heaven.
Let canticle and hymn
O'er high-place and o'er grove resound,
O'er valley, plain and mountain,
Far-borne by secret magic of the winds
To Beth-Dagon's distant pile ;
Where the mighty habitant
Hearing shall applaud your joy.
Let the furnace glow
With seven-fold fury to consume
The base reviler of our rites :
Storm and tempest sweep
His viewless ashes through mid air,
And with careering blast
Disperse them to the corners of the world,
Lest reposing they pollute
The region where they fall.

ELIAS.

O Thou that sittest on the cherubim,
Awhile have pity and forbear :
Lest, if thou walk abroad in anger,
The pillars of the firmament
Astonished tremble, and before thy throne
Heaven and earth in terror fly,
And never more be found.

AHAB.

Thy prayers are imprecations : but rail on,
Unheeded ; never sound was on thy tongue
But uttered ill-portending speech. Rejoice
Ye prophets yet again : for had we seized
By violence of arms, or lured by fraud
Our foe into the snare, a doubt had risen
If safely we might trench upon a life
By Him protected, who at will withholds
The dew, the clouds and rain : but self-betrayed,
Self-brought, he comes ; abandoned of his God,
And open to assault : himself hath sworn,
That if no prodigy this day proclaim
His embassy divine, heaven never more

Will arm in his defence. The cause shall straight
Be tried in Israel's sight : already called,
They are at hand, and soon shall drag him forth
To the blasphemer's death.

PRIEST.

But why delay
Our vengeance ; and what cause is to be tried
In Israel's sight, and how ?

AHAB.

Have I not said ?
The cause of Baal and Jehovah ; here,
In open day, before the assembled tribes,
To prove by invocation which the power
That will miraculous answer give.

PRIEST.

Alas !

What means the king ?

AHAB.

What should I mean, but joy
And victory ? hast thou not a heart to share

The triumph, thankless that thou art? what mean
Those wildered looks of dread?

PRIEST.

A fearful sound
Is in mine ears, calamity and ruin
Glaring with horrid speculation, swim
Before my sight; I shiver, and the pangs
Of death are on me.

AHAB.

What hath changed thee thus?
What madness or what demon thus hath bound thee
In trance of idle fear?

PRIEST.

Say not, O king!
An idle fear. I knew not he had come,
Self brought: it cannot be, he would have rushed
Thus wantonly on fate, but that he bears
A charmed life, a spell yet undivulged,
Which nothing may resist.

AHAB.

Abhorred slave !

Ill fares the monarchy that lends an ear
To falsehood such as thine. I loathe the wretch
Who, constant to no purpose, yields and stoops
Like a wind-shaken reed. What aid hath he,
Save from his God ? And that by solemn oath
He hath renounced. Are all your multitudes
Affrighted at the sight of one ?

PRIEST.

His power

We know not what nor whence : but such it is
That when his angry imprecations roll,
The countless elemental host attend
And execute his will. A thousand fears
Environ me, and with mysterious dread
I shudder, and my brain turns round.

AHAB.

Are all

Alike conspired, and are the worshippers

Of Him who spake in Horeb with the priests
Of Baal leagued in union, each to each
Echoing one universal shriek and groan
Of presages funereal? Come the worst
That can be thought upon, and let the foe
In ease and safety set at nought my power :
What then ? it were a rank indignity
Unwonted and unfit for kings to bear ;
But there the bodement ends : his rescued life
Imports no peril.

PRIEST.

Not to thee, O King !

Fenced as thou art with the divinity
That prospers Omri's lineage : but to us
Bethink thee what must follow, if the throngs
Of Israel once misconstrue or mislike
Our worship and tradition. In the heart
Of the gross populace we must be all
Or nothing : either we are held as gods,
Or they to us impute, from us exact
Of all their trespass and of all their suffering
A bloody expiation.

AHAB.

Be it so :

Shall I for that, for them, or thee remit
One atom of my will? If earth or heaven
Forego their wonted courses to defend
Our adversary, thou and thine have called
The peril on your heads : and let it come.
Thou hast provoked, and must abide it. Oft
Hast thou with vaunt and legendary tale
From better thought seduced me to confide
In Syrian gods and Baal's boundless sway :
These hast thou set before me as the sole
Protectors of my realm ; these now be thine.

PRIEST.

We fable not, O king ; our godheads then
As now were mighty ; but dissolved in bliss
They note not every chance. At such an hour,
While Baal sleeps, Jehovah issues forth,
Dispeopling empires.

ELIAS.

Cease your arguings, vain
Deceivers, and deceived, self-blinded, self-
Undone : for when discourse of reason weaves
The web of sin, when pandering to damnation
Ye plead the cause of fiends, Jehovah hears,
Records, and dooms, and on the impenitent
Rains tempest, fire, perdition infinite,
Unquenchable : then lust and murder howl,
Then blasphemies obscene convert to groans
That respite never know. Enough: thy will
Hath been obeyed : the congregation comes,
O King ; and inspiration visitant
Awakes my parable. Ah, sinful nation !
Ah, people laden with iniquity !
Why halt ye thus between the severing ways
Of life and death ? For if the Lord be God
Him worship, and Him only : but if Baal,
Then follow him.

CHORUS.

Yet unassur'd, they press
With eyeballs on the strain to nearer view ;

Then back, as from a fearful apparition,
Recoiling, gaze in consternation, shame,
And tongueless wonder. Such the pause ere winds
Mix in tumultuary uproar, and rend
The cedars and the rocks of Lebanon.

ELIAS.

Four hundred priests and fifty in the groves
Of Baal, and around his altars bow.
I, even I alone, am to be found
A prophet of the Lord; none else dare own
A name so fatal: single here I stand
Against a host. The sheep and oxen know
Their owner; and the turtle and the crane,
'The stork and swallow keep the appointed times
And seasons of their coming: man alone
(Though prime of all the creatures) will not hear
The bidding of his Maker. Hither bring
Two bullocks: one let these idolatrous
Slay and divide: and pile it upon wood,
And put no fire beneath: myself will slay
And lay on wood the victim that remains,
But without fire. Then call ye on the name

Of all your gods, and I will invoke
The Lord ; and he that answereth by fire,
Let him be God.

PEOPLE.

'Tis just ; and spoken well.

PRIEST.

Again before thy feet we fall : O change
Thy purposes, great king ! nor cast us down
Into the deluge dark and turbulent
Of peril : Think, ere yet it be too late
For hope and mercy.

AHAB.

Think me not a leaf
To shake with every wind. The word is past
Irrevocable : shall I be forsworn,
And start aside from compact in the view
Of Israel, and in presence of the sun ?
The wide world perish rather ! Answer not

But by obedience ; or the brazen hoof
Of power shall trample you into your graves.

PRIEST.

O lost—for ever lost—
Miserable they who trust
In princes ; miserable they
Who for a monarch's smile renounce
The service of their God.
Whither can we turn,
Or whither can we fly ?
Every way lost—the vengeance and the curse
We called for, fall on our own heads,
And ruin drags us to the dire abysme
Whence no return.
Ye vales, and mountain groves, no more
Shall we behold you : farewell to the pomp
And revelry of sacrificial feast ;
Farewel to the light,
And to the pleasureable day,
While into bottomless despair
Unpitied we descend.
O that we were the worm

And reptile crawling in the dust—
O that we could melt
To nothing—that we never had been born.

ELIAS.

The victims are at hand. Ye first essay
The rites, for ye are many ; and prepare
Your holocaust, and to the fuel bring
No mortal fire ; but supplicate your Gods,
If peradventure from the cavern's gulf,
Or pregnant cloud, or sun, or errant star,
Or furnaces of over-arching heaven,
Swift conflagration answer to your call.

CHORUS.

Now on th' enchanter priesthood (sure though late),
Falls retribution : circummur'd and watched
By Israel's tribes, they taste the bitterness
Of death already, while from side to side
They glance, as meditating flight. How heave
Their bosoms in dismay : with downcast looks,
With sunken eyes, with trembling lips and hands,

Voice or utterance need ye none
To record the wrath supreme
Incumbent on each high-place, fane, and grove
Where heathen incantation scares the sun
With mingled rites of lust and blood.
The giant Anakim were driven
From Hebron and their vaunted towers
That nestled in the rock,
The gory Canaanites were slain
From Merom's waters east to Mizpeh's vale ;
Their steeds were maimed, their chariots burnt with
 fire,
Their populous cities heard
No tread of human feet ; the lion walked
Along the grass-grown streets,
And bitterns screamed beside the stagnant pool.
Such peace have they who bow
To idols, and forsake the Living Lord :
Could they under mountains hide,
Or in the central earth their impious throngs,
Even there would he o'ertake them in the deep,
And turn the sheltering darkness into day.
Or if their impious pride
With brief prosperity permissive crowned,

Above the stars of God aspire
Into the palaces of heaven ;
Suddenly, ere speech
Or thought can mark, they fall
To helpless ruin, hopeless woe ;
Their pomp, magnificence, and power
Vanished like the morning dew,
And not a place or name behind.
But the progress of the just
In ever-during blessedness serene,
Measures with inexhausted strength
The drear and barren wild,
Careless of the burning sand,
Unconscious of the stifling blast ;
So full their hearts of hopes
So fixed on immortality their gaze.
When tempest and when danger swell,
Deep calling deep, the winds and waves,
The seas and skies contending,
Till rocks are rooted from their base,
And mountains hurled to the profound
Of ocean, still they smile
At the vain turmoil of the storm,
And o'er the cloud-assaulting billows walk

In unappalled peace ;
Till on eagle-wings they mount
Into interminable joy,
And in their flesh see God.

AHAB.

Of this no more. It is not now a time,
I am not now at leisure, nor at ease,
To hear or to reprove thee, while the hours
Drag thus in long delay. The ritual pomp
Is all complete, and punctual in each shape
Of ceremony and sanctimonious charm
Which antique usage bids. Why linger then
The voices that vaticinate, the powers
That oft in temple, or imbowering grove,
By fall of waters, or in craggy cleft,
Gave signal and response ?

ELIAS.

It is because
They have been summoned to the combating
Of open day, and hunted from the dens

Where enginry and secret avenues,
Practised along the vaulting or the walls
Or pavement of the dusky shrine, gave form
And semblance to false wonders. Such thy Gods ;
So motionless, and impotent, and dumb,
Till human fraud abet them. Sentinelled
By guards like these, O how defenceless stands
The city which on Shemer's purchased hill
Thy father Omri year by year adorned
In envy, to outparagon the praise
Of Salem's templed bulwarks ! but unblest
He builded in unrighteousness his towers,
Nor called o'er his metropolis the Name
Of Jacob's God : hence, like the mellow hangings
Of palm and vine, her unprotected wealth
Serves but to lure the plunderer. Think betimes,
And Him invoke whose omnipresent arm
Can strengthen thine endangered gates with bolt
And bar impregnable : bid Israel cast
Aside their idols, and in penitence
Adoring, mourn : contrition is the pledge
Of grace and covenant with auxiliar heaven.

PRIEST.

Hoarse with our agonizing cries, and faint
With toil, our strength suffices scarce to leap
Upon thine altars, Baal, or conjure
Thy succour : hear us, king of ether ! hear
Thy suppliants tottering on the precipice
Of death : for see, how the regardless sun
Is stooping from his noontide tower, and half,
And more than half our respite from the sword
Is past and gone. Thou hearest not : O yet
Gird on the sword, brandish the spear, and hurl
Thy fire-shafts on our offerings !

ELIAS.

Cry aloud.

He is a God, and wherefore answers not ?
Is he consulting, or in hot pursuit
Of routed foes, or to a distant land
On journey bound ? or peradventure, worn
With warlike feats, he slumbers ; nor awakes,
Till started from oblivion by the din
Of ceaseless clamour.

CHORUS.

Franticly they vent
Their inarticulate woe : see how they slash
Their naked arms, till streams the gushing blood
O'er knife and lancet.

ELIAS.

By a thread they hang
Between two worlds, from succour and from hope
Shut out beyond redemption, scarce alive,
Ruin before, behind, on every side,
Above them God, beneath them hell. Aloud
They cry to Baal, to the graven stock
That cannot help, nor hear. There was an hour
For mercy, but they spurned away the boon ;
And neither Israel's tribes, nor Israel's king,
Nor all the hosts and princedoms of the world
Can save them now.

AHAB.

And have I lived to hear
Contempt and arrogance like this ? But know,

There yet is power in Israel to control
Thy bloody will. Ye prophets of the groves,
Give to the wind your fears: for by my queen,
My dignities and life I swear, that end
The strife as end it may, whate'er betide,
Whate'er befall, though earth be shaken, skies
Be opened, and blue cataracts of fire
Rush down, yet my supremacy shall walk
Around you, and forbid th' approach of harm.

ELIAS.

'Tis deeply sworn: and since the kingly oath
Is past that so it shall be, ye are safe,
If earth-born prowess with Omnipotence
Can vie, or dust and ashes cope with heaven.

CHORUS.

How feeble in such strife habergeon, spear,
Purple and domination, hosts and realms,
'Time witnesses, and we have heard of yore
From our forefathers. Jericho and Ai,
Midian and Amalek, and Bashan's king,
And Kirjath-Arba, and from Halak mount

To Baal-Gad in Lebanon's rich vale,
And Debir's brood, and Hazor's fire-doomed towers,
Defied the armies of the Living Lord,
But from the presence of Jehovah fled
As hornets from the blast.

PRIEST.

Divinities

Of Zidon and of Tyre, awake and see,
Hear and avenge ! By all our service past,
Our genuflections, sacrifices, vows,
Our self-gashed nakedness, and streaming gore,
Hear from your bosky summits, greenwood haunts,
Rocky clefts and pebbled rills !
Remphan and Asarach, give ear
In this our utmost need !
Chemos and Anamelech,
Behold us, and defend !
Is there still no voice, no sign,
No speech nor answer, though the day
Lower and lower yet
From its meridian height descend ?
Career not thus, impatient sun,

Nor with thy swift-declining beams
Mock at our misery.
Check his fatal speed,
Queen of the firmament !
And drive him backward to his orient halls,
Or chain him motionless in mid-way heaven.
Unheeding he rides on.
Not a vision, not a sound,
Not a chance is left,
Not a hope remains ;
While the westward orb
Inexorable goes down.
O for a moment to recal
That parting radiance : still it sinks,
It disappears—the rest is death,
And the dreadful judgment-day,
Th' eternal and insufferable doom,
Whose very thought is hell.
A thousand long-forgotten deeds of sin,
Too late remembered, now before our sight,
In legioned horror glare,
And all around us flock the throngs
Innumerable, of murdered innocents
To Moloch sacrificed by fire

In that detested vale.
Fall on us, hills and mountains,
Hide us from Jehovah's eye.
The bottomless profound
To devour us opens wide,
And blazes, thunders, groans.

ELIAS.

Weep ; for ye have full cause : no power is mine
(Whate'er my inward will) to let you go ;
So rank is your offence, so long inured
To falsehood, so obdurate to blaspheme.
Ye cannot call it ignorance ; for ye knew
The law ere ye forsook it, the decree
Inflexible, that nothing may redeem
Idolaters from death : it is no time
To dally, when rebellion against God
Infects our confines ; mercy is in league
With justice then to stay the plague, and close
The mouths that open only to persuade
Impiety and lust. I was not sent
To change the Law's pre-ordinance, or mix
Mine own short-sighted pity with behest

Of sovereign power : and therefore, though with feet
Reluctant, though in grief I come, constrained
By embassy and office to convict
And yield you up idolaters, to abide
Th' appointed doom. 'Tis now the solemn hour
Of evening sacrifice, the hour divine
Wherein Jehovah day by day made pause
In his creation, and with blessing sealed
The perfect work : O hour so lovely once
In holier years, when Isaac's heritage
Walked yet with God, and earth resembled heaven,
How hast thou long been lonely and forgotten,
Thy vows how silent, and thy services
How slighted and profaned ! Each idol shrine
A thousand hands adorn : but how defaced,
How moss-clad, violated, broken down,
The altar of the Lord ! To you I turn,
Assembled multitudes. Twelve stones collect,
According to the number of the tribes
Of Jacob, whom the Lord in Peniel named
Israel, redoubted prince ; and build anew
God's altar, and around it make a trench
Ample and deep.

PEOPLE.

At thy command 'tis done.

ELIAS.

The wood I range in order, and divide
The victim-steer, and on the wood dispose
His reeking limbs. Stand not aloof; advance,
Mark well, look narrowly, and record bear
No fire or spark is nigh. Next, to confirm
Your own eye-witness surer still, with speed
From Kishon water bring, and on the wood
And on the bullock pour; the second time,
And yet the third time with insatiate drench
Flood the piled fuel.

PEOPLE.

Thrice have we obeyed;
And, lo! the prodigal effusion streams
Redundant from the altar, and dilates
In spacious current.

ELIAS.

Yet remains to fill
The circling trench.

PEOPLE.

We fill, and it o'erflows,
And far and wide around the thirsty sand
Is gladdened with the moisture.

AHAB.

What imports
The tedious ceremonial? will it ne'er
Have end? what means this studied circumstance,
This lingering preparation, that provokes
Disdain and laughter? Will the waters blaze
At thy command, proud Tishbite? But I thank
Thy vaunting folly that hath made impossible
The succour of confederate fraud, and stamped
My victory doubly sure. Haste, to the proof,
Impostor; meet thy doom, embrace thy death.

ELIAS.

Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob,
Let it be known this day that thou art God
In Israel, and that I have done all this
According to thy will. Hear me, O Lord !
Hear me, that all the people may adore
In penitence thy Name.

PRIEST.

O mercy — mercy —

PEOPLE.

The Lord he is the God ! the Lord he is the God !

CHORUS.

Glory to God on high !
Speech and sight confounding,
Fire from the Lord hath fallen,
And consumed the sacrifice :

Prostrate sink the congregation
Nerveless and unmanned.
Merciful heaven, recal
My senses, that they wander not.
The wood, the stones, the dust,
Are vanished into clouds of smoke
That breathe a fragrancy divine ;
While the swift combustion
Hath drunk the waters of the trench, and left
The broad capacious bottom singed and bare.

PEOPLE.

The Lord he is the God ! the Lord he is the God !

ELIAS.

Who then are these ? What wonder if the land
For your offence be barren, while the feet
Unhallowed and unblest of idol priests
Pollute the sacred region ? Plenty ne'er
Shall answer to your tillage, benison
Shall never crown your dwelling, till their blood
Make expiation. Seize them, bear them hence
To death : let none escape.

PRIEST.

O horror—horror—
Chain, torture, starve ; more miserable make us
Than want and leprosy ; trample us down
Like a vile bondsman or a bondsman's slave,
So we but live : or grant us a delay,
A little respite, for an hour, a moment ;
We ask no more : ye will not slay us yet,
While prostrate thus and fainting lies the king,
Whose oath was pledged for our defence. O think
Of your allegiance, and deny him not,
Your own anointed sovereign, time to breathe,
And speak his will.

PEOPLE.

We know not if he live
Or die ; and we ourselves may perish next,
If we delay : alive or dead, his power
Avails you not.

ELIAS.

It is no question now
Of earthly potentate ; a mightier hand
Is working, and the King of kings hath fixed
Unchangeably your doom : I may not spare,
And therefore will not hear you. Men of Israel,
Yours is the ministry : but lest they fall
On consecrated ground, to Kishon's stream
Drag the devoted throng, and slay them there.

ABDIAS.

Bewildered and astounded I forget
My duty to the king, whose lengthened swoon
May stretch to dissolution. Chafe his brows,
And gently bend him forward : he respires :
I feel the pressure of his hand.

AHAB.

O misery !
Call me not back ; methought I had escaped

To sleep and darkness : plunge me not again
Into the fiery deep.

ABDIAS.

Press not around
So closely ; give him air : he scarcely breathes,
And knows not what he utters.

AHAB.

Still no hope
Of pardon ? yet awhile forbear me—quench
Th' intolerable flame.

ABDIAS.

What means my lord—
What means the king of Israel ?

AHAB.

Let me sleep,
Let me sleep on for ever : wake me not
To pangs infernal.

ABDIAS.

Be not thus dismayed :

There is no cause : revive thee, and arise :

Look round, my sovereign.

AHAB.

Am I not ingulfed

In sulphurous seas of everlasting flame ?

The light that blinds me, is it not the blaze

Of conflagration ? and the winds I feel,

Are they not rolling fire ? Where is the fierce

Refulgent hierarch, that struck me down

To nethmost hell ? even yet demoniac screams

I hear, and see a thousand hideous things

That language has no name for. Near me stand,

Abdias, and nearer yet : thy presence cheers,

And will protect me.

ABDIAS.

Let the king recal

His scattered thoughts : no enemy is nigh :

And all may yet be well.

AHAB.

How deep a gloom
Saddens the twilight ; what a silence awes
The listening world ! why am I thus alone ?
And ah !—what sudden change of horror comes ?
Again I hear the fiendly yell, and groans,
Deep groans of death.

CHORUS.

The prophets of the groves,
And Baal's priests, are by the people hence
To slaughter borne ; and Kishon's channel flows
Impurpled with their blood.

AHAB.

Evil betide
The tongue that tells me so. And who hath dared
Such treason ?—Fool to ask—there is but one
Would so presume, so desperately defy
The majesty of kings. And art thou here,
O enemy of Israel ! Get thee gone
Into thy solitudes, thy rocks and dens,

And with thy woodland savages consort,
Fiercer thyself than they : hence, and beware :
Exult not—I shall find a time—

ELIAS.

At least
'Tis now no time to threaten or blaspheme,
When here, as erst on Sinai, walks the Lord
In more immediate presence ; whose approach,
Rocking earth's vast rotundity, unbars
With unimaginable touch the dark
Abode of clouds and dew. I hear the sound
Of an abundant rain : arise, retire,
And speedily with needful sustenance
Repair thy vigour, wasted with the fast
Of this eventful day. Myself the while
To Carmel's top in meditation go,
And wait the benediction.

CHORUS.

As he went,
His hair, his beard, and all his visage streamed
With unction of celestial light ; his feet

Disdained the ground ; and gliding through the air
He seemed an angel ministrant, from earth
In glory re-ascending to the sky.

AHAB.

He takes upon him state, and gives command
As though he were a king ; and (shame to speak)
I bear it ; for he has me in the toils,
And holds me captive : his the present hour :
The future may be mine.

CHORUS.

How hard for pride
To think submission ! Frowning he departs,
And in a hot distemperature : so looks
The famished lion, when by force repelled
From his new-grappled prey : heaven subjugate
The mutiny of his will, and soften down
That stubborn heart.

ABDIAS.

Unhappy is the land
Whose prophets prophesy deceit, whose priests

False visions see, and dream delusive dreams,
Whose counsellors in idol fanes bow down,
Whose monarch swerves from virtue ; peril then,
And woe and pestilence are nigh : abroad
The venom flies, and far and wide the realm
Is tainted by example.

CHORUS.

Wonderful

Is the mercy of Jehovah,
Waiting long, and sending oft,
Early and late, the monitors
Of penitence, the blest ambassadors
Of peace and pardon : full of wonder
Are all the works of God !
Children's children shall proclaim
The history of this hour :
Sacred no less to memory than the voice
Of visitation and of woe,
When from Gilgal came
The chiding angel of the Lord
To Bochim ; and the people wept
At his rebuke, and sacrificed

Before the Lord with praise
And remorseful supplication.
In wrath remembering mercy,
The God of Israel hath withdrawn
The blast of his displeasure : yon expanse
Of lucid atmosphere shall gloom
With gathering vapours, while the clouds
Drop fatness down.

ABDIAS.

What power hath zeal ! with what a lion heart
Jehovah's servants work his will ! the rage
Of kings, the scorner's mockery, and th' uproar
Of anarchy and slaughter cannot shake
Their stedfast soul : the moon may hide her beams,
The mid-day sun grow pale, the morning stars
Like lightning fall from heaven ; but undismayed
Appeal they to the Mercy-seat on high,
And faithful as the sun their orb perform.

CHORUS.

Their progress is from strength to strength,
From perfection to perfection,

Mounting indefectible.
Such the perennial influences
That sanctify th' elect of God
With imbreathed incorruption ;
Such the consolatories
Which in the glass of contemplation seen,
Imparadise the soul,
From her poor tenement of clay
Aspiring on imperishable plume
To pass the barriers that disjoin
The feeble child of pain and sorrow,
With dim mortality eye-filmed o'er,
From the beatific vision
Of the inexpressive Sire.

ABDIAS.

Yet bartering (mindless of religion's bliss)
Our birth-right for the transitory gust
Of appetite, the Canaanitish gods
Have we enshrined and worshipped. Scarce three
 years
In blight and drought and famine groaned away,
And scarce the heaven-enkindled sacrifice

Could discipline our wandering to draw back
From the high-ways of hell. But clemency,
Outrunning our contrition, to the fields
Gives harvest now : health in our palaces,
And peace and plenteousness within our walls.

CHORUS.

How terrible, O Lord !
The tabernacles of thy power, when veiled
In dark severity thy countenance
Is hidden from created eye,
On the right-hand unapproached,
On the left invisible.
O Lord ! how excellent
The tabernacles of thy power,
When mercy lightens up the drear obscure,
Diffusing over earth and heaven
The sunshine of immeasurable peace.
How oft, when war and servitude
Had visited our sin, and left
Our joyous cities pale,
And solitary as the pelican
Or desert owl,

Have the legions of Jehovah
With emblazonry of light
Environed us, and given
To our scant battle and unpractised arms
Strength irresistible to blast
The pride of heathen kings.
For this the prophetess forsook
Her judgment-seat beneath the spreading palm
In Ephraim mount, and with Abinoam's son
Led their ten thousand to subdue
The numberless array and iron host
Of Jabin's tyrant realm :
For this the valiant sword
Of him from Abiezer smote,
When his three hundred scared the camp
Of Midian, and with rout and slaughter chased
Their myriads over Jordan, and o'erthrew
The remnant fifteen thousand that encamped
In Karkor with their death-doomed kings,
Zebah and Zalmunna :
For this the matchless Nazarite
Pulled down the vault of Gaza's fane
Upon the heads of populace and peer,
Amid their idol revelry,

With all their sculptured Gods,
That with himself a nation lay intombed.
O ! if obdurate still
In heathen groves we burn
Incense, and eat the offerings of the dead,
Was never guilt like ours,
Nor like ours shall be perdition.
God of our fathers ! shield us from the curse
Of unrepented sin :
Else—but wherefore strays
Adown my cheek th' involuntary sorrow ?
And wherefore weighs dejection
So heavy on my heart ?
Museful Melancholy
Hath led me to a vale of shadows
And fastnesses of death ;
Where enlabyrinthed I wander
In wild presageful woe.
In other spheres I roam,
And sounds of other ages hear—
Heavy tidings, doleful vision,
A slaughtered people, ravaged fields,
And cities wrapt in penal fire.
The dreadful implement of wrath,

The conqueror from Assyria comes :
And prince and people in captivity
And exiled bondage pine.

ABDIAS.

The king returns : impetuous and uneven
His gait ; and in the working of his brow
I read unquiet thought.

AHAB.

Why did I hope
For solace ? rest and ease are gone for ever.
What am I but a shadow of the king,
If thus defied I cannot stretch an arm
Against one rebel life ? my very breath
I draw in pain, till I have blood for blood.
Yet tell me, Abdias (for my troubled soul
But ill remembers), did he not predict
The near approach of rain ?

ABDIAS.

Such was his word :

And well we know, from those heaven-tutored lips
No promise ever vain or frustrate fell.

AHAB.

It cannot be. What power hath he to bind
Or loose the clouds ? My royalty and pride
Cry out amain, revenge ! and for revenge
I will envisage the most hideous shape
That danger can put on. But who is this,
What breathless messenger, whose violent speed
Outstrips the wind ?

MESSENGER.

By me Elias greets
The sovereignty of Israel, and forewarns
Thy chariot and thine horsemen to prepare,
And with dispatchful haste to Jezreel ride,
Ere yet the rain-swollen torrents intercept
Thy progress.

AHAB.

Who and what, and whence art thou,
And where thy sender ? where the pluvial haze,
The vaporous breezes, the meteorous signs
And harbingers of rain ?

MESSENGER.

I am the son
Of that poor widow underneath whose roof
In Zarephath the man of God sojourned,
And day by day miraculously fed
Our penury : and when a sore disease
Had wasted me to death, his pity heard
My mother's frantic cries, and by his prayer
Recalled me from the grave : that life redeemed,
To him and to his service I devote,
In fond though weak requital. When he left
Thy presence, mighty prince, on me he called
To follow him ; and instant as the word,
I was caught up ; smooth sailing on the deeps
Of the thin atmosphere, aloft we went

To Carmel's top ; and at a cavern's mouth
Beneath the rugged brow the prophet paused,
And on a rock sat down, and o'er his face
Folded his mantle, and reclined his head
In tongueless ecstasy of meditation.
At length he bade me scale the craggy peak
That overhangs the cave, and look abroad
Upon the western waves ; abroad I looked,
But not a speck nor breath was in the skies.
The boundless ocean slept, th' horizon glowed
With tranquil red, and lethargy had lulled
Earth and the circumambient glimmering air.
Seven times again at his command I climbed,
And seaward looked : the seventh time I beheld
A small and misty cloud, like human hand,
Arising from the deep. The prophet then,
Bade me in chariot of the wind ride hither
And warn the king to Jezreel, ere the rain
Obstruct his way.

CHORUS.

Adorable Supreme !

What thanks, what praise, what blessings can repay

Thy boundless grace ! The Godhead comes : the
 skies
Are black with clouds and wind.

AHAB.

How darksome lours
The tempest ; mingling heaven and earth : he comes,
With whirlwind armed and thunder : follow me,
Abdias, and let us hence ; with heavy heart
And heavy tidings to my queen I go,
Ere yet the volleyed lightning strike me dead.

CHORUS.

What means yon arrowy flame
Air-kindled on the mountain's murky brow ?
Is it a star from heaven
Gliding down the craggy steep
In lengthening stream of fire ?
It comes upon me, and assumes
The stature, and the motion
And lineaments of Adam's sons :
It is himself, the wonderous seer,

Th' intelligencer divine !
What hand upbears thee, wings thy speed,
And vestures thee in blaze
Of majesty and lustre that confound
My mortal vision ?
Come not in avenging glory,
Like the minister of wrath,
Who from Dan to Beërsheba
His seventy thousand slew,
Till beside Araunah's floor
The voice of mercy stayed
His hand, already stretched abroad
To destroy Jerusalem.

ELIAS.

The Spirit of the Lord
Is on me, and I honour in the sight
Of Israel's heritage their hard-ruled king.
Space still is lent him, still he breathes,
Not yet irrevocably cast
To condemnation.
To Jezreel gates I run,
A living torch before the royal car,

To guide his wheels unerring and secure,
Through perilous pass and rugged plain,
Up dizzy mount, and into dell profound,
Amid the dense tempestuous gloom
Of whirlwind and of midnight.

CHORUS.

Dazzling and momentary as the flash
Of lightning east and west illumining
The storm-fraught clouds, or interlunar dark,
The prophet disappeared : the neighing steeds,
The shouting charioteers, and acclamation
Of the wild populace already speak
The sovereign's course begun. From Kishon's banks
The congregation flocking, upward gaze,
And passionately catch, and in the palm
Of every hand with glad astonishment
Shew each to each the first prelusive drops
Of long-wished rain. Slumbrous serenity
Hushes the welkin, and in moisture pure,
Soft-trickling as the dew on Gideon's fleece,
And seasonable and mild, all heaven distils—
Sweeter than honey, richer than the gold

Of Ophir. Faster now, and faster yet
The pattering treasures fall : the whistling winds
Renew their battles, and amain
Roars the dread-bolted thunder.

What sable oceans roll,
Shrouding Carmel's head !
They burst : the firmamental floods
In deluges descending, from his sides
Rebounding smoke. Lord of eternity !
Glory and honour, might, dominion, praise,
To Thee on earth be ever sung,
As in the immortal paradise
Where Thou reignest evermore,
Clouds and darkness rolled around thee,
Mercy and truth the habitation of thy throne,
The full-voiced Cherubim resound,
Day and night and without end,
Hallelujah ! hallelujah !

THE END.

NOTES.

(a).—Page 3.

The round towers of Ireland have been described as watch-towers (or beacons) as belfries, as places of penance, and as fire-temples ; but as Mr. Rickman observes, in his admirable essay on Gothic Architecture, “ their particular service is very difficult to assign.”

(b).—Page 3.

Here occurs a slight (and the only) deviation from literal fact. The result of the race was, as here stated : but we did not personally witness it ; being engaged in the Gap of Dunlow.

(c).—Page 10.

“ Mountain-dew”—alias Whiskey.

(d).—Page 15.

“ Upland of the Boar”—“ Turk-Mountain”—from *Torc, a Boar*.

(f).—Page 43.

The solemn effect produced by the echo of one deep bugle-note, is finely appropriate to the savage grandeur of Glenna-Copul, “ The Horse’s Glen.”

ERRATUM.

Page 71, stanza 20, line 4, "So Soothe" should be "To soothe."



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